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CONDUCT
OF
MARRIED
LIFE
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LONDON
1758





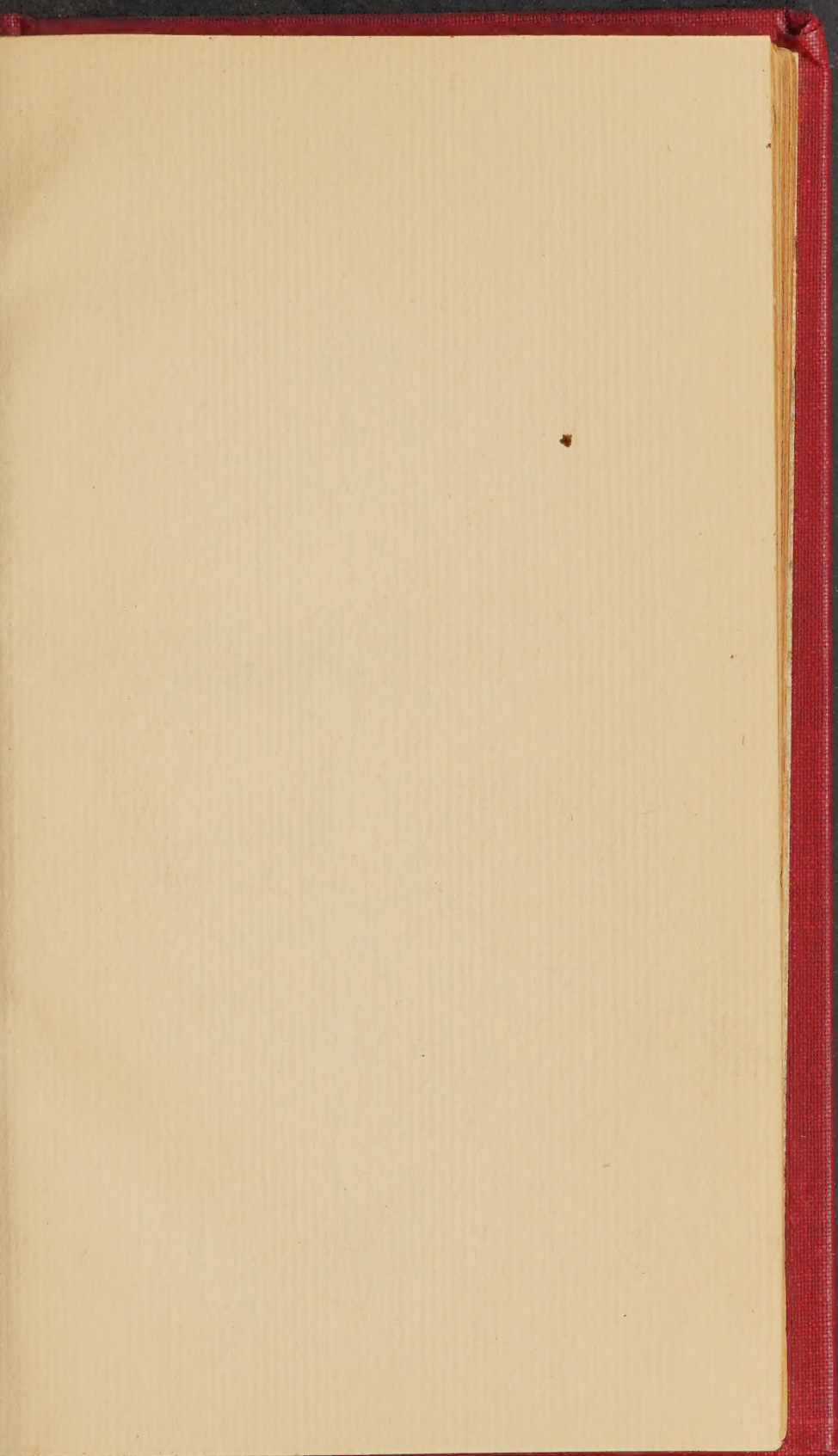


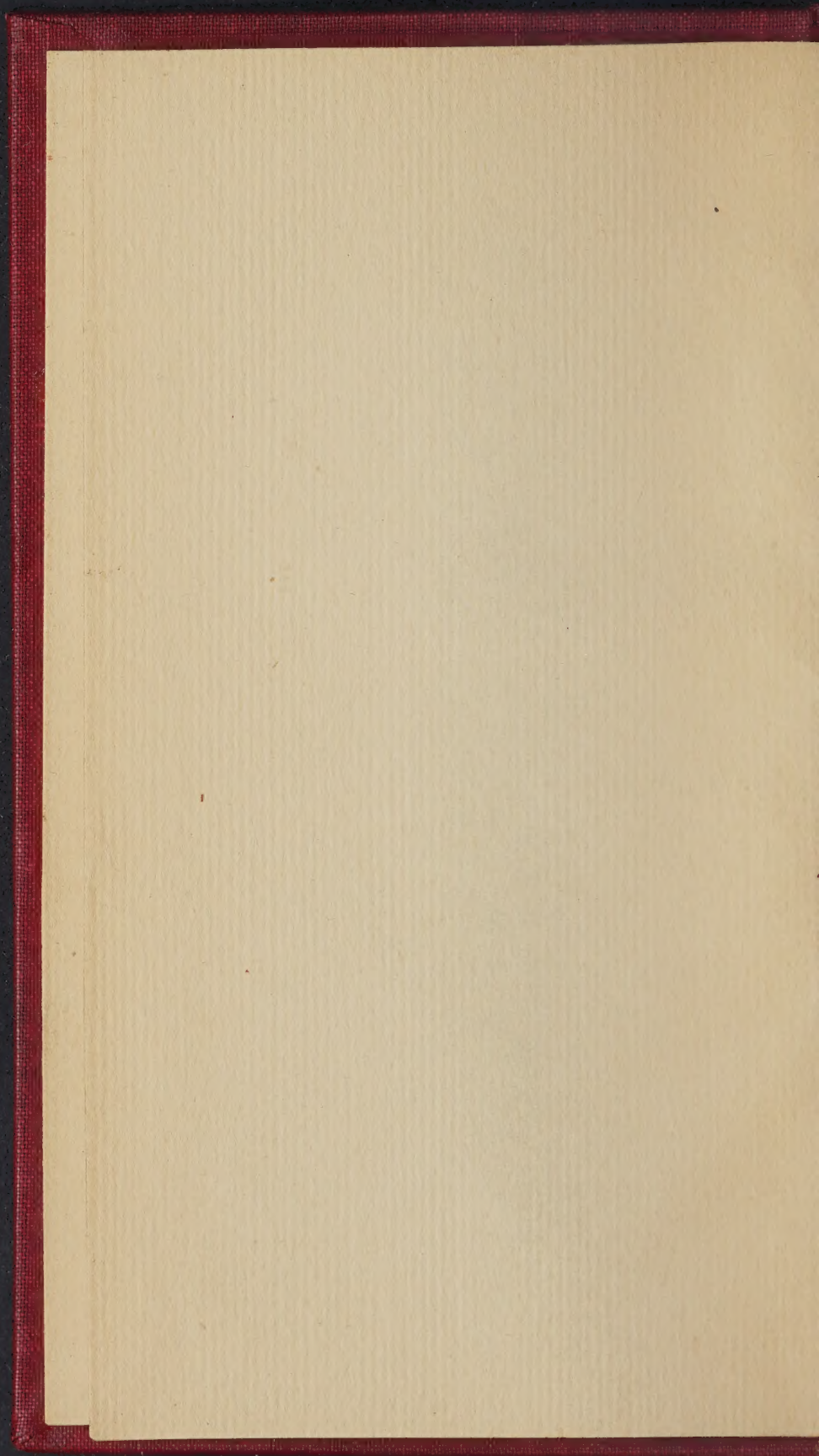
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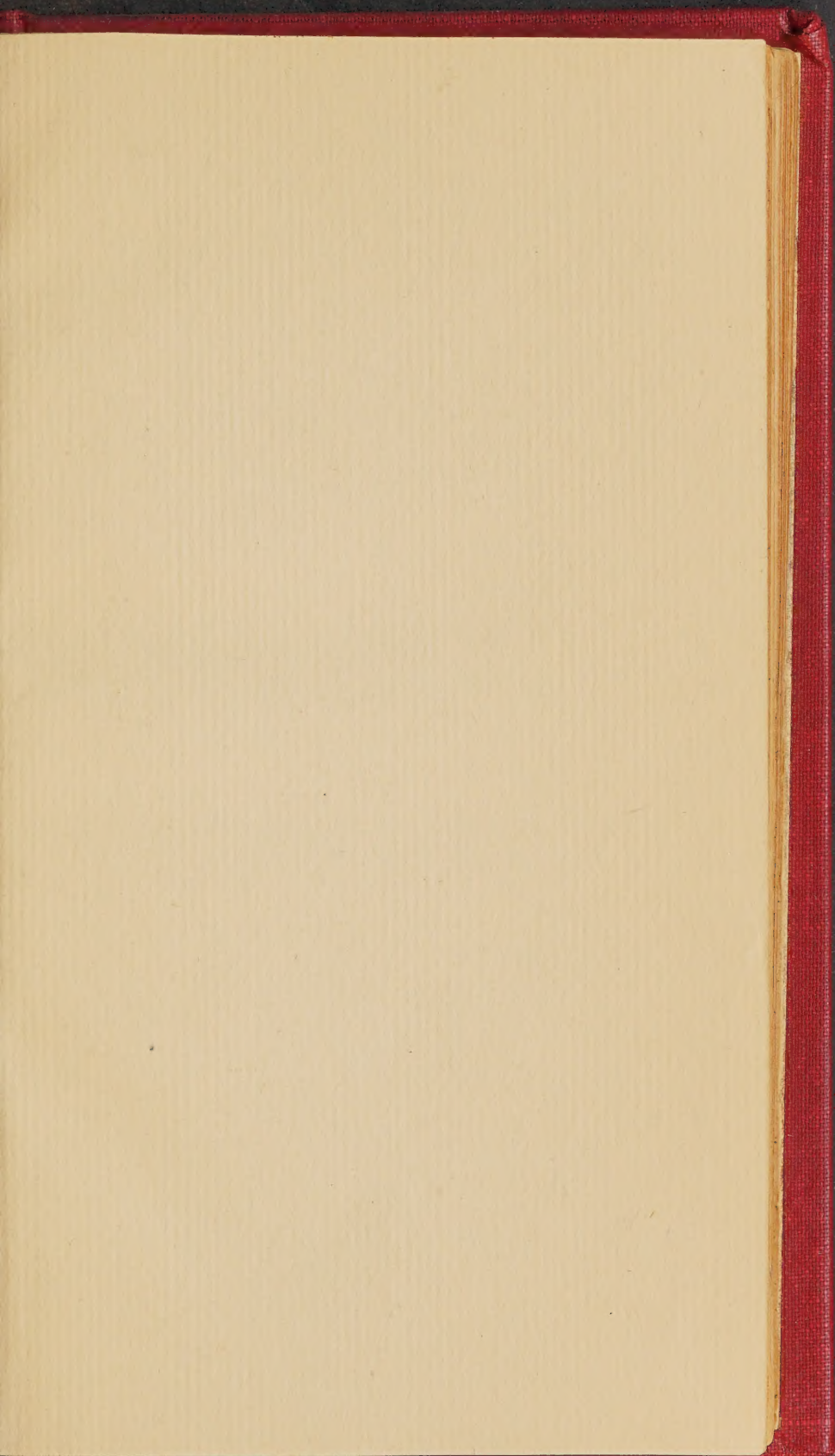
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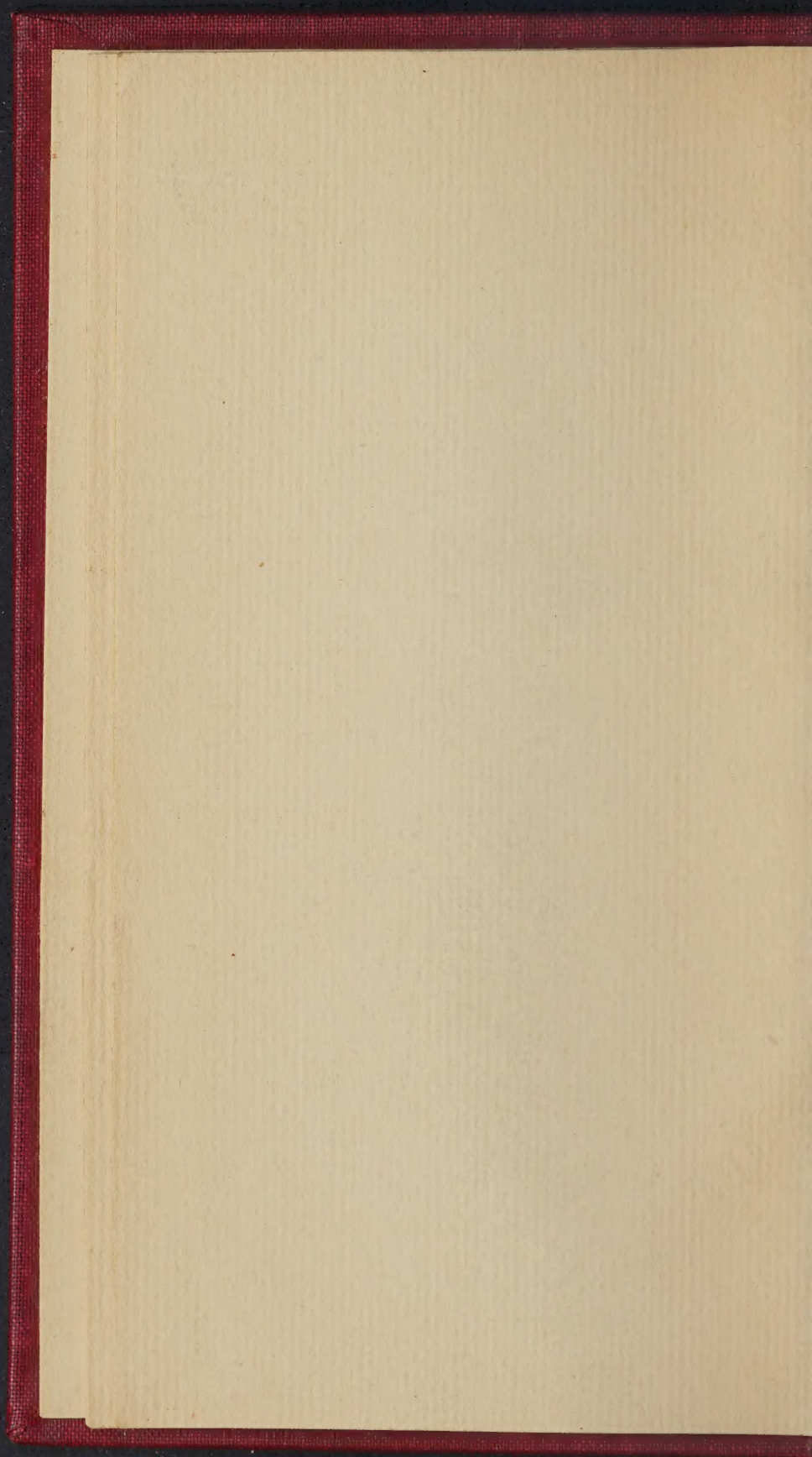
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THE
CONDUCT
OF A
MARRIED LIFE.

Laid down in a
SERIES of LETTERS,

Written by the HONOURABLE

JULIANA-SUSANNAH SEYMOUR,

TO A

YOUNG LADY, her RELATION,
Lately Married.



L O N D O N :

Printed for R. BALDWIN, in Pater-noster Row.
M DCC LIII.

By John Taylor





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A D.



THE
CONDUCT
OF A
MARRIED LIFE.

LETTER I.

Of the Disposition of a Wife.

MY DEAREST ***,



WHILE others are congratulating with you on your Happiness, give me leave to be studying the Means of its Continuance. I am concerned in this: for as I love you tenderly, I shall have the greatest Pleasure in whatsoever makes
B you

you happy, and I shall in the same Degree feel with you any thing that may give you pain. You are very young, my Dear, and have little Knowledge concerning the Nature of that State into which you have entered. I believe you will not doubt the Sincerity of my Affection for you: A longer Experience in the World has given me Opportunities of observing many things that have not fallen in the Way of your Knowledge. I desire you to accept of the Fruits of that Experience, and to remain convinced of the good Intent with which I offer it. While you allow me this Justice, you will pay a due Regard to what Advice I shall give you, and I am sure you will reap the Benefit.

To shew you my Sincerity, I shall begin with great Plainness and Freedom. There is only one Path by which a married Woman can arrive at Happiness, and this is by conforming herself to the Sentiments of her Husband. In order
to

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to do this, you must first know of what Kind they are, and how they naturally agree with your own Temper and Disposition; for the more they do so, the greater is your Prospect of Felicity. In order to this, I would have you seriously consider both yourself and him: And as we are all apt to deceive ourselves in Things which regard our own Persons, and our most near Concerns; give me leave to tell you what is my Opinion concerning both you and him, which you may correct from your own Examination.

You are both too young to have Experience; and, were there no other Reason, believe me, my Dear, this is sufficient for your having recourse to the Advice of your Friends: for no Understanding will avail without it. Those who are your Inferiors in all Respects beside; yet, from this single Circumstance of having seen more of the World, will be able to in-

struct you ; and I desire you will always hear and regard their Admonitions.

As to yourself, my dearest ***, I do not know that you have one Fault ; but, if you are not careful, you will soon acquire many. You have a natural Goodness of Disposition, and Tenderneſs of Heart ; you have a ſufficient Underſtanding, and your Education has been the moſt careful. Theſe, my Dear, are the Foundations for a happy married Life, becauſe they are the Qualifications which will give Pleaſure to your Huſband, and will create in him an Eſteem for you ; but they are only the Foundation, and it is not impoſſible that a Structure very different from that which they would naturally belong to, may be raiſed upon them. Although you have none of the Faults of your Sex, you are not without its Foibles ; nor, let me ſpeak to you freely, my Dear, without its Follies. As you are agreeable in your Perſon, it is natural you ſhould be praiſed, and you have

have Pleasure in it; but take heed, my Dear, how you indulge this Pleasure. When a Woman is pleased with Flattery, she is not displeased with the Flatterer. She may proceed from this to shew him Marks, though innocent, of her Favour; and be assured, that the Husband, who sees a Man complimenting his Wife, and sees that he is a Favourite with her, will be uneasy. If he come to an Explanation, there will be some Disquiet; since Suspicion, however slight, on so nice a Point, will touch you nearly. If he be silent, he will continue to observe, and the jealous Eye sees more than there is. Your Civilities, although innocent, may be your Ruin: your Husband will lose his Peace; and, after that, yours will be of no Continuance.

Your very Virtues, under your Inexperience, will lead you into Error, unless you will listen to Cautions about the exerting them. Your natural Compassion will be soon discovered in your Family;

nor will it be long kept within the Bounds of your own Walls. There are, in this Town, People enough ready to prey upon the Unwary of this Stamp; and, before you are sensible of the Danger, you will have run into Extremes, which will make you uneasy if kept secret, and your Husband dissatisfied if disclosed. That you will be in the Danger of this Temptation is certain; but the Security against it is easy. Ask his Advice before you do any Act of Bounty, and you will enjoy it doubly.

You are fond of Drefs: I don't speak this in Accufation; every young Person is fo: And thofe who are moft agreeable have moft Right and Pretence. Your Taffe in this Particular has been indulged to the Extent in the Preparations for your Marriage; but do not look on thefe as the Standard of your future Appearance. Thefe are Times of Shew, and Extravagance is a Custom on the Occafion.

caſion. For the future, let your Huſband ſee what will become you before you diſcover that you have Occaſion for it. I am certain he will not be remiſs in this, and that will come with double Pleaſure from him as a Preſent, which you would have obtained by Requeſt. It is a dangerous thing to confeſs to you; but I was the Occaſion that your Pin-money is ſo trifling. You may be diſpleaſed with me at preſent for this; but you will love me for it hereafter. I have ſeen many ſad Effects of the Independance of Wives; and I am ſure I have provided for your Happineſs not only in the obviating all theſe; but in the giving to your Huſband ſo many Opportunities of obliging you.

I have been very free in declaring my Sentiments concerning you, my Dear; but it becomes my Friendſhip to you to be ſo. If I loved you leſs tenderly, I ſhould be more complaiſant. I have ſhewn you what are the Tendencies to

Mistakes in your Conduct ; for at present they are no more than Tendencies, and you see how they are to be avoided. I shall speak my Sentiments with the same Candor and the same Freedom of your Husband : but, not to tire you, my Dear, that shall be in another Letter.

* * *

LETTER II.

Of the Disposition of an Husband.

I Have been very free, my dear ***, in giving you a Picture of yourself ; and you have owned that it is a just one. This assures me that you will regard my Cautions against giving way to those Errors to which your Disposition is most open. But it is of as much Importance to you to know your Husband's real Character as your own ; and I shall therefore declare my Thoughts on this as plainly.

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In the first place, I am glad that he is not vitiated by Travel: The Faults and the Foibles of our own Growth are less, and they are more easily conquered than those which young Men import from other Nations. If he have some of the Errors which are the Product of a *British* Education, he has, in return, all the *British* Virtues. You know that Good-nature is the peculiar Character of our Nation; and indeed (for I shall use no Flattery here) I do not know any Man in whom it is more eminent. His Person is what you have declared to me you liked; let no Inconstancy of Mind alter your Thoughts on that Head; for your continuing to love him will be not only a Virtue itself, but it will be the Occasion of many others. You have often told me, that you thought him the compleatest Man, and the finest Gentleman of his Age; let no Flight of Fancy rob him of that Preference. A little Love added to his real Advantages might well

make you believe so. If ever you think, or but incline to think otherwise, remember you are in danger of lessening that Affection which ought to increase after your Marriage: And remember, that, without that Affection, there can be no Happiness. Check the dangerous Thought in time. Remember the Hours in which you doted upon him; and let his great Esteem and Love for you (for he hath shewn both in marrying you) not only revive, but improve and increase that honest Affection and virtuous Partiality.

His Temper is, if I may judge from the great deal I have seen of a Man whom I believe to be above Disguise, sweet and indulgent; and his Understanding of the higher Class. Do not let my confessing that he does not appear to me in the highest of all Lights on this Account, make you think lightly of him. The Man of but middling Understanding, and he is a great deal more than
I this,

this, is greatly the Superior in this Respect to the unexperienced of our Sex, and will always be able to advise them. Let him stand in this regard with you. I would place him just where he ought to be in your Esteem, because much of his Happiness, as well as yours, depends upon your judging rightly of him in this Particular. I would have you consider him as much more qualified to judge of Persons and of Things than you are ; but I would not have you receive his Opinions as beyond Exception. In Trifles you will do well to think so of them ; nay, if you think otherwise, it will be prudent in you to obey them : But, when they concern Things of Consequence, I would have you mention the whole in private to some wise and faithful Friend. This, my dearest ***, is a Point of the most tender Nature for me to touch upon ; but my true Regard for you would not permit me to be silent. It is more tender yet for you to regulate ; but too much depends upon it, to suffer me to leave

it unnoticed. I have gone through it with a trembling, but a determined, Hand; and, when I review what I have written, I do intreat you to pay the most strict regard to it.

I look upon the Disposition of your Husband, my dearest ***, to be like your own, rather open to Foibles than to Faults. At least in him they are so; for, my Dear, what in Women are Crimes; Custom, however unjustly, has made in Man but Follies. I do not approve of this Distinction, nor will you; but, as it is established, you must act as if you approved it.

When I mention those things among the Men which are called Follies, I understand the Love of Drinking to be one. Of this your Husband is not strictly to be accused; for I believe he does not love Wine; but his Good-nature leads him into an Error very nearly approaching to it: He drinks because others love
it.

it. It is the foolish Fashion of the Time : A Pride in pouring down large Draughts of intoxicating Liquor is removed from the Reforts of the Mean and Vulgar, whom it became, to those of the most polite ; and, even in private Families, it is as frequent as at public Meetings.

I have distinguished between the Man who drinks from Choice, and him who does not approve, but barely complies with it, to shew you what is the true Character of your Husband in this Particular ; the one is a Sot, and never to be reclaimed ; the other, though he cannot be called off at once, or perhaps ever perfectly from it ; yet will be led to disgust it more and more, and finally perhaps to disregard it.

This is a Distinction that concerns you nearly. You may, by Gentleness, and by soft Persuasion, prevent at least his ever coming to think it a Pleasure ; and there may be yet more in your Power. All
that

that you can effect in it is of the greatest Importance, and this slightest Advantage is worth all the Trouble you can bestow to gain it.

There is a Secret of more Use by far than Persuasion in this Cause. Make your own Company agreeable to him by every Art and every Indulgence, and you will wean him from a Custom which he sees gives you Pain, and which robs him of so much of you. But all this must be the Effect of good Humour : One Reproach will destroy all that you have been labouring for Months; and throw him into the Fault with new Extravagance. You may rejoice when he avoids a Party of this kind openly; but it must be by Accident only that he discovers your Uneasiness.

There is more, my Dear, in this than appears. It is not only that Drinking is in itself a Fault, although Custom has taken from it that Name among the Men; but it leads to many others. It
is

is not only that it alienates the Mind, as well as estranges the Person, of your Husband from you ; but it may introduce the greatest of all Faults, a Falseness to your Bed. Many Men have fallen into this when under the Influence of Wine, who would have started at the Thought while their Reason held its Place : And it is not only in Women that the first Folly of this kind leads to more.

It is the Light of that false Colouring which Custom gives to Crimes, that even this Infidelity in Men is looked on as a trivial Offence ; but such it is considered, and there are few who will not promote it in a Mind that naturally abhors it. This is the Light in which Drinking, and those who encourage it, will appear in the worst Colours to you ; but they cannot be seen in worse than becomes them. I have painted out the Danger to alarm you, not to render you suspicious. You will see the Necessity and the Advantage of weaning your
Husband

Husband as much as you can from this Weakness: And as he has no real Propensity to it, you will find that Task not over difficult. The Method is obvious: They err indeed who attempt it by railing at the Fault; but she will find the Change wrought in some Degree daily, who finds the Method of making herself and her House agreeable in a Degree superior to that to which those Scenes can pretend.

The greatest of all Conquests are those which are gained without Opposition, at least without apparent Opposition. Use the Means, my dearest ***, without seeming to regard the End that will follow: And as I have already mentioned to you in the Article of Cloaths, you will find it hold in all, that he will do, with an infinitely better Grace, and greater Good-will, those things which seem to himself his own Act, than what you visibly obtain from him. Men have naturally great Obstinacy; the best of them have some of it: They have all Pride; the best of them
often

often the most of it. They do not love to be forced, nor even to be persuaded out of their Customs. They cannot bear that a Woman should lead them to any thing. They have a settled Opinion of us, as inferior in natural Authority and in Understanding, and it will have an Appearance of Meanness to themselves to be guided by those whom they should direct; or to be governed by those whom they should command. Go not you about to get the better of this Opinion: I believe it is justly founded; but, if it was not, 'tis not your Business to reform the World; nor can it be your Interest to hazard your own Happiness upon a dangerous Experiment. To be more free on this Subject; as the Business of this Letter was to point out the real Character and Temper of your Husband, which, in some Particulars, your Inexperience might mistake, I must mention to you that I think he has not the least Pride of any Man in the World, and Obstinacy always attends this in a proportionate

portionate Degree. I do not reflect on him in this; his Birth, his Rank, his Fortune, and his Connections all naturally produce the one, and that is as naturally the Parent of the other. But, my dear ***, he has Good-nature in a much greater Degree than any other Quality; this would influence him to give into every thing within the Bounds of Prudence that you prescribe without seeming to do so: And more than this, he doats upon you with a sincere Affection. This will give you a greater Power; it will give you indeed all that you ought to wish, and that will continue so long as you do not abuse it: for the greater his Love, the less he will bear that.

You see, my dear ***, I have laid down with great Freedom what I take to be your Failings, and what I take to be not his Faults, but those Faults into which there is Danger of his falling. I have told you the Method to prevent the greatest,

greatest, and to draw him off from the lesser ; and I have been at some Pains to lay down the Cautions that may prevent your running into Mistakes, even while you think you are doing right. The Manner of going about a thing is more than the Ability to do it. Under these Restraints you will find it easy to effect that, which if hastily and carelessly attempted, even on a right Foundation, would have failed ; or worse, would have produced Consequences just contrary to the Design.

Every thing fails that is attempted rashly and with Precipitation. Never complain of the Hours which he spends from you : for, being uneasy at that, he will leave you the sooner ; and, expecting more of it at his Return, he will defer that Return the longer. Never object to his Company ; for he will then think his own Judgment questioned, and that he can only support it by Opposition. These things of themselves
 weary

weary and nauseate the Mind ; nothing except what is innocent gives lasting Pleasure. The first Hours of a Scene of Drink and Revelry are joyous ; but the last are tedious and painful. If you receive him tenderly when he returns from one of these Parties, his real Love to you will make him feel it in the most affecting Manner. He will compare the Pleasure of those Hours immediately after his Return, with the Pain of those which passed just before it. He will resolve to rise sooner from the Party at the next Meeting ; and he will do it. From leaving the Bottle at the first Sign of Uneasiness, he will, on your continuing the Pleasures of your Meeting, leave it before. He at first learned to go away from Pain, he will now go from the Prospect of it. This will be an Effect, a certain Effect, of the Difference he finds between the nauseous Obscenity and fatigued Spirits of his Companions, and your Tenderness and Affection : And what is this ? 'Tis, my dearest *** , what

I told you would happen ; the End is effected while you seemed not to have it in View. He is no longer fond of Wine ; he leaves the Glafs when the most sober do ; and this being his own Act, not yours, will continue. Being the Effect not of your Remonstrances, but of his own Conviction, he will never return to the Error.

Would you be more sure of this, the Means to preserve, are the same with those which obtained the Benefit. Let that constant Attention, that accustomed Pleasure at his Return, make known the real Joy you feel in it, and keep up his Sense of your Worth, and of the Unworthiness of his former Pleasures : And, to add the finishing Touch to the compleat Victory, do not seem to know that you have won it. As you never let him discover, during the Attempt to wean him from these false Pleasures, that you was attempting to draw him from them ; so,
now

now you have effected it, never let him discover that you once thought him addicted to them.

* * *

LETTER III.

Concerning Visitors of Ceremony.

YOU tell me you are pleased with my Advice, and that you see it is reasonable: You give me, my dearest ***, the greatest of Pleasure. I knew you had Understanding to be convinced, and I know you have so much Sincerity, that I may believe you are truly so, when you say it. I pretend to no Advantage over you but Experience. I tell you of things which you would know yourself hereafter, but then it would be too late. Use my Observation with your own Goodness of Heart and Prudence, and you will be happy. If you regard me at all, my dear ***, you must do it fully: The greatest Events often depend upon the slightest

slightest Incidents; and there is many times more in the Circumstances than the Action. Take heed, my Dear, that you not only do what I recommend to you; but that you do it as I recommend it. I do believe you will: I take all your Assurances as most sincere, and I shall go on with the same Freedom.

I have laid down the principal Cautions; I have painted out to you the general Rules for your Conduct; they are founded upon what is my Opinion of your own Temper and Disposition, and on that of your Husband. Remember them; for they will therefore be of universal Use: they will direct you in a greater or less Degree in every other Occurrence. I beg of you, as you value your own Happiness, to keep them always in your Mind; and to refer every other Advice that it is possible for me to give you to these; as also to examine every thing you intend to do by them. What agrees with these will be always so far

far right, and what disagrees will be almost universally wrong. These are the great and general Cautions; the rest, though less important, are to be regarded, and, though particular, must have your Attention. It would be doubly unhappy to fail in the lesser Concerns, after you had been right in the greater; but this would certainly be the Case, if these were treated with Neglect or Carelessness.

You will be visited, my Dear, by Multitudes of Persons on this Occasion; many whom you have never seen before, and some whom you will never see again. The greatest Part of these come as Spies upon your Conduct, and they have no other Wish but to represent you to your Disadvantage. A Bride is an Object of the common Observation: Every Company is pleased with hearing some Account of her; and, as the World is always more fond of Satire than of Praise, those who mention you will be most fond of Opportunities of doing it to your Discredit.

Discredit. A Bride is like a new-made Minister of State; every trifling Part of her Conduct or Conversation is examined, and that not with the best-natured Eyes.

I dare say, although your Inexperience might not have given you Opportunities of knowing this ungenerous Turn of the Generality of your Sex, your own Prudence will direct you how to act, now that you are informed of it. You will know that People who come to you Strangers, and go away such, have no Right to your Confidence. If you tell them your Opinion on the most indifferent Subject, they will strain it to some Meaning, from which they will scan your future Conduct. You will know, that, before People who come to find fault, the less you say, the less are their Opportunities of doing it. The Visits are only of Fashion, and Fashion may be kept up at the Expence of a very few Words. 'Tis always polite to hear, and you have thence the best of all Excuses to avoid
C talking.

talking. A Yes, or a No, are capable of very little Misconstruction ; and if that be an Occasion on which this is possible, 'tis always civil, as well as modest, to decline giving a positive Opinion.

I would have you treat all that pay you their Compliments on this Occasion with perfect Respect, and all with the same Degree of it. You have other Hours for the real Conversation of your Friends. To be particular to them, is to neglect the rest of the Company ; and your Words will not be the less liable to Misconstruction, because they are not addressed to those who will make that use of them.

A great part of this Ceremony will be over when the first Visits are paid ; for the rest, 'tis easy, in this Town, for People to be very civil, and yet perfect Strangers ; to visit for Years, and yet never meet. Those who Compliment you on this Occasion I would not have you think of entering
into

into the Rank of your familiar Friends. Some may deserve it; but it is impossible that you should know which. You are too young to distinguish; and if you should attempt it, the most deceitful would be those whom you particularised for the best. I am no Friend to that idle Custom of visiting People we never wish to meet, and taking Opportunities to do it at times when we know they cannot be at home; but, on this particular Occasion, it is right. You will owe Visits to those who have paid you the Compliment, and they will owe you Returns to those Visits. Some of them will be so honest as to confess their Intentions in the first, by declining it. For the others, it is your Business to be very long between the Card, and the Return of it: and thus to shake off that by Degrees, which you have no Inclination to continue, and which you cannot drop at once.

I do not mean that I would have you make a Point of being strange to all these Persons, and to these in particular, for the rest of your Life: I would only have you set them on a Footing with the rest of the World of Strangers, among whom you may occasionally make Acquaintances. In general they will claim some little Pre-eminence, as they are known to your own, or to your Husband's Family; but this may be so slightly, and the Distinction is so little, that Prudence will pay no Regard to it. This is the Conduct that I should think advisable, my Dear, to your Visitors of Form. There is much more to be said with regard to those who have some Degree of Intimacy; but this must be the Subject of another Letter.

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L E T T E R IV.

Concerning intimate Acquaintance.

ALthough it is long since I was a Bride, I can remember, my Dear, many things in which I acted very wrongly at that time; and having seen the same Mistakes in very many since, I suppose them natural, and therefore, if not guarded against, universal. I do not think you more likely to err, my dearest ***, than all others of your Sex; but, as you are liable to it as well as others: consider the Occasions and the Consequences.

Be not in haste to appear the married Woman, nor think that a Look of Care becomes you, or is the proper Mark of it. Care, my Dear, comes very near to Sorrow! at least in the Marks by which it shews itself upon the Countenance. I would not have you be sorry that you are married, nor would I have you look as

if you repented of it: 'Tis doing Injustice to your Husband, and it is calling for Compassion to yourself; and, if you have the Spirit of a true Woman, you will know that there is no Insult so great as Pity. Thus much regards yourself; but your Acquaintance are not quite unconcerned in it. They will be watchful upon your Conduct, though they will not understand things too severely; it is therefore prudent to beware even of these.

It is but a little while ago you was a wild giddy Girl at School: It will be expected that Marriage render you a little soberer, and it is fit it should do so; but do not let it have the Appearance of having made you so more than it really has. Whatever are the Effects, let them appear; make them neither greater nor less than they are, and shew them without Disguise. Don't let it appear that you think you ought to be grave; but don't hide it, if you are so: The
Affectation

Affectation will be the Extream, the Reality is always moderate.

Of all things, my Dear, let your Conduct in this Respect be equal. Those who are familiar enough to see you in the same Hour without your Husband and with him, let them not be able to say that his Presence throws any Restraint upon you. This is too common an Error. I very well remember that it was my own; but it is injurious to both your Reputations: It accuses you of Dissimulation, and him of Want of Good-nature. Whatever is your Gaiety when he is absent, do not give it up at his Entrance into the Company: He loves you for your Spirit, and he will be more pleased with it than with any forced Reserve that shall break in upon it. The setting out right, even in Trifles is all; what you are at first, you will continue: And it is not only your own Peace, which is the greatest of all Concerns, but the Opinion of your Intimates, for that is not a little Matter,

will depend upon it. One way or other their Sentiments will be communicated to the World ; and they will presage but ill of her Prudence, as well as Happiness, who sets out with Dissimulation. You will think this a Trifle ; but it is not so in its Consequence. I have known many a Marriage presage unhappily ; and, from the Opinion that it would be so, I have known it declared that it was ; for the World is ready at Addition, from no more than such a Circumstance. It gives Rise to an Opinion that the Tempers are unlike, and that must be a Source of Disquiet. I do not say what might be necessary, my Dear, if you were married to an old Man, or to one of a severe and morose Disposition. I am not talking to all the World, but to you : You are married to a young, a good-natured, and a cheerful Person : He will like in you what he approves in himself ; and you will give him an Uneasiness in affecting to become reserved. I would have you, for your own sake, avoid the least Tincture of Dissimulation :

lation: I know it is not in your Temper; but you are so young, that you may plant any thing there: And, believe me, the flightest Step makes way in a strange Manner for the greatest. You will have more Satisfaction in your own Mind from appearing always exactly what you are, and you will preserve by it an Esteem from your Acquaintance, which will as surely as their Suspicions, make its way into the World.

It will be natural for you, my Dear, beside accidentally intrusting your more intimate Acquaintance with your Sentiments, to do it purposely; but, though it is natural, it is wrong: Avoid it, my Dear. The minutest things that concern a Husband and his Wife may be swelled into Incidents of Consequence. Little things may make the best Friends Enemies, and then the slightest Hint will serve as a Foundation for Volumes. I do not only guard you against giving Breath to the least Suspicion or Disgust

with regard to your Husband ; I would prescribe as strict a Silence in regard to the Circumstances of Joy. You can only be tempted to this by the asking Advice ; but few will be able, and yet fewer will be ingenuous enough to give it. If you want Counsel in any Point which I have omitted to name in these Letters, come to me. You will have a double Advantage in this : You will be sure of honest Counsel, and you will be sure that the Secret is not betrayed. I am not a Stranger to the thousand Anxieties which attend a Match where there is real Affection : I am not ignorant that even the Satisfaction may be too great to be concealed : There are very few who are fit, or who are worthy to be entrusted with either. Your nearest Relations, and those of most Experience, are the most proper ; and things which appear new to you, are to them so familiar, that they will give you Quiet in a Moment.

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There is another Particular with regard to your most intimate Acquaintance, concerning which I must not be silent ; since I have seen the Peace of many Families, otherwise beyond the Reach of Accidents, sacrificed to it. If you have among them one which your Husband treats with a particular Regard, or one who is more than ordinarily attentive to him, find an Opportunity of dropping the Acquaintance on the first Discovery ; so will you save the Peace of yourself, her, and your Husband. Do not mistake me so far, my Dear, as to suppose I am thinking any thing criminal would be the probable Consequence of this Particularity ; but it is enough to you that it is possible you might suspect, at some time, and from some Circumstance, that there was, or that there might be : This would immediately destroy both your Peace and his. If you had taken up the Suspicion ever so imprudently, you would find Occasions of keeping it alive as effectual, al-

though as unfair; and whether you concealed or whether you disclosed it, the Event would be the same. If kept within your own Breast, it would prey upon your Peace; if disclosed, it would provoke your Husband. If kept unknown to him, it would still give a Tincture of Distrust with regard to all that he should say that appeared affectionate; And he who truly loved you, and who had a Right to be believed in saying that he did so, could not bear that; so that the most prudent Conduct would still leave it fatal: But if you should, from any idle Circumstance which your Jealousy had wrested into a Meaning that it had not, at any time have plainly accused him with it, you forfeit all his Regard from that Moment. Men but very ill bear the being suspected, even when they are guilty; when innocent, it is intolerable to them. They think there is a Merit in Constancy, and, as the World goes, it is so rare a Virtue, that a Man may be allowed to take some Pride in it; at least

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it is a Merit that you must be sensible it will be a Pain to him to lose undeservedly.

Men bear Suspicion, my Dear, I tell you, but very ill, even when they are guilty; you may know from this how they will bear it when they are innocent. A prudent Wife, even if she found her Husband false to her, would shut her Eyes to the Discovery, knowing that to reproach is but to harden him. Surely then you will see it as an Act of the greatest Impropriety to be suspicious without Cause; and as this will naturally happen from an indulged Intimacy, such as I have mentioned, although an innocent one, you will see no Caution can be too great, nor any time too early to take it up.

I have advised you, my dearest ***, to be very cautious of the first Dispute, I must persist in my earnest Admonition to you to be as careful to avoid the first Suspicion. You will see, by the Occasions

sions which I have supposed the most probable to produce them, though on both Sides innocently; that I look upon you to be Persons who truly love one another. This is the Cement of all Happiness in the married State, therefore preserve it against all that are but possible Attempts.

Every one is proud of being thought a good Husband, because it is the greatest Character of a worthy Man. Every Man, very few excepted, possesses it at first; and every Man will take Pains to preserve it as long as he can. It is Despair, and not Disgust, that makes so many affect to despise it. No one gives it up untill he can preserve it no longer; and then, because he cannot possess it, he calls it by ill Names. When once the Claim to this Title is given up, all the good-natured Offices of the Husband are thrown off with it; and he no longer attempts, or even wishes to please. You see, my Dear, how much depends upon the keeping up this Character;
while

while he possesses it, he will take some Pains to deserve it: When he has lost the Name of it, he will abandon the Reality.

There is not less Danger, I say, from the first Suspicion, than from the first Dispute; nor is the one to be less dreaded by her who would live happily with her Husband than the other. Every Man is as fond of the Title of a faithful Husband, as of that of a tender and affectionate one; and it is in this, as it is in the other, the Difficulty of maintaining the Character that makes it so often be thrown up, and so affectedly ridiculed; but, my dearest
 ***, this Difficulty arises from the Conduct of the Wife, not of the Husband, and therefore it is in your Power to obviate and to prevent the Danger. While you esteem him constant, it will be of little Concern to him what the World supposes; but as soon as you suspect that he is otherwise, he will be so. It has been said of Women, that unjust Suspicions

eions have rendered them bad, when they would otherwise have been innocent. I hope it is not so. But with the Men you may be assured the Observation has Weight. She who suspects that she has a false Husband, and owns that Suspicion, will never have a true one.

There is some Restraint upon the Man who enjoys the good Opinion of his Wife; and, to preserve it; he will avoid not only real but apparent Occasions of giving her Suspicion; that is, he will avoid giving her the greatest of all Pains, and running the greatest of all Hazards of a Life of Wrangling. As soon as this is forfeited, he becomes careless, and not only gives her Suspicion when there is, but when there is not Cause. All that he wished to preserve is lost, and 'tis in vain for him to think he can recover it. I have known, in the Course of my Life, my dearest ***, many a Husband reclaimed by the Moderation of a Wife, and very many rendered abandoned by her

her unguarded Violence of Temper. Many a one has relinquished a real Intrigue, from his Wife's avoiding to discover it. Many a one has thrown himself into a real one, by her Suspicion of such as were imaginary.

I would fain, my dearest ***, set before you the real State of what is called Inconstancy in Marriage, and Intrigue among Persons of Character; for it is very different from what is represented by some, and is imagined by others to be so. And I am afraid that not only the Peace of many Families, but the Virtue of some private Persons is sacrificed to the Error. People too readily fall into both the Supposition and the Practice of that which is represented to them as common; when they would banish the Imagination from their Minds, and much more the Guilt from their Breasts, if they were sensible that an ill Woman of any Rank was, as she really is, a Monster.

Malice,

Malice, my dear ***, is much more frequent in the World than what it represents: You have been told of the Wife of this Man, and the Daughter of another; of this Beauty, and that Coquette; of this Demure, and the other rattling Girl, having lost their Reputations with this Captain, or that Rake. 'Tis true, my Dear, that they have lost their Reputations, and they have deserved to lose them by their Imprudence; but this is all they have lost. They have not lost their Innocence, notwithstanding all the confident Reports which tell you so. You see, my Dearest, what they sacrifice to their Want of Discretion; no less than their Characters: and let this be a Warning to you to avoid the Occasions, even the most remote ones of Scandal. Wherever there is Beauty there is Envy, and wherever there is Envy there will be Malice and Invention joined with it. You see what a Precipice it is that the Indulgence of Nature has set
you

you upon, and watch your Steps accordingly. She who is innocent will indeed have the Peace of her own Mind to comfort her ; but she will forfeit very much who has not Discretion.

I have mentioned this to shew you what is the real Danger of giving way unto those Giddinesses of Temper that betray Women of Character to the Censures of the World : But, as I told you, real Vice is not common, and, among the Multitudes who are suspected, she that truly deserves the Suspicion is one in ten thousand.

The young Men, before they think of marrying, fall into the Snares of those artful Creatures whom you see at every public Place, and they find Reason to repeat their Folly. When they afterwards marry, they see these Creatures in the hateful Light in which they ought to view them ; not as Objects of Desire, but of Disgust. The Thought of being out of the way of their Allurements is

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one of the great Motives they find to marry; and they will never, unless provoked and urged to it by the Suspicions, by the Disregard, or by the Infidelity of a Wife, return to them.

As to the Women of Fashion, or of Character, Suspicion may find many ways to reach them; but actual Ill scarce any. It is impossible that a Woman educated in the Principles of Modesty and Virtue can give them up with Ease: And even if she no longer was kept from ill by her Reverence of Virtue, the Fear of the Consequences of Vice would deter her. Beside, if all these Considerations were of no Weight, where are the Opportunities? 'Tis easy to imagine; but it would be very difficult to find them. You may be assured, my Dear, that of the thousand Reports you hear of this kind, hardly one is true. You may be assured, that whenever such a Fall from Virtue happens, it is soon discovered: All Eyes are watchful, and Lovers

are unwary. The Discovery is proclaimed, and you know the Consequences. If you will consider, my Dear, how seldom this really happens, in Proportion to the Number of the Reports you hear of it, you will join with me in believing how little Credit ought to be paid to those Reports; and you will find how little Reason you will have ever to suspect your Husband; and what Improbability there is that the Women of Virtue and Character with whom you are acquainted should give you that Occasion.

You will thus be taught to do Justice to your Husband, and to them, in case of any the most strong Appearances, should there be such, of Suspicion; but there is also a Justice which you owe to yourself, which is to prevent the first Approaches of that Suspicion. I can believe that your Prudence would be a great Safeguard to you after this Explanation; but Love has many Eyes, and Fear will shut out Prudence. Although

I have told you how impossible it is that any Person of Virtue should give you Cause of just Suspicion; yet, when I recollect your Fondness for your Husband, I can see that many things may give you unjust Cause, and that will not give you less Pain, or be productive of less fatal Consequences. I did not tell you that you would have, or that you could have, Cause to think meanly of any who visit you; but you may do it without Cause; and as this would injure them as well as you, there is no Care too great to be taken in order to avoid it.

It will very probably happen that some one of your Acquaintance will be the particular Favourite of your Husband; not the most handsome of them, for that rarely happens, and will be less likely to happen in this Case; because, without Flattery, you will set them in an indifferent Light in this Respect. They are not always the best Faces that are the Favourites with Men who have

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no Design. There is an Air of Freedom and good Humour which many have the Art to put on, that want the Charms of Person; and this always takes with the Men who mean no ill, beyond all other Allurements. I have known many a Party, among whom the Least Agreeable has been the Favourite; and in all Probability, if it ever happen that you are tempted to be uneasy about the Civilities of your Husband to any of your own Intimates, 'twill turn on such a one as this. If this prove the Case, you will know, in the first Observation, what it is that you are, and what you are not, to suspect; but you must, if you value your own Repose, my Dear, although you fear less, be not the less upon your Guard. It will be easy for you to find some Opportunity of dropping the Acquaintance at first, and the easier and less suspectedly, because the Intent of your doing it will be secret. By the Caution I have laid down, you will be the first Person who shall see it. You will be

alarmed

alarmed not only before your Husband sees, but before your Rival is conscious that she is preparing the Mischief; and he will neither regret the Incident that breaks the Acquaintance, nor have the most remost Guess at the Cause.

'Tis thus, my dearest ***, a good and prudent Wife will always study to preserve the Affection of her Husband: 'Tis thus that she will prevent the Occasions of estranging it: She will obviate the Mischief, that it would be in vain for her to labour to remedy, if they were once formed; and she will prevent those Ills, which it would be out of her Power to remedy. Faults are stubborn things; but Tendencies to Faults, my Dear, are easily removed. Men are obstinate when they are engaged in any Course of Ill, or but of a wrong kind; and they suppose it an Affront to their Understandings to be persuaded out of it by a Woman: But they are easy while under the Road to what is wrong; and altho'

no Power could drag them from the certain Ruin, when engaged in it, and the Event of one Attempt to do it would be fatal to your Peace. They may be led with Ease by Prudence and Good-humour out of the Road to it; and the Intention, even if ^{it} should not succeed, will be the Occasion of no Harm.

I have written you a very long Letter, my Dear; but 'tis on a very important and interesting Subject: And as I know your own Understanding will be more powerful with you than my Influence, I direct my Thoughts more to the Side of Reason than of Authority. I would convince you, my Dear, and then I know I shall succeed: And by explaining to you, so far as my Experience has given me Opportunity, the Views and Motives of the several Persons with whom your Concern will be, I rather wish to open your Eyes than to direct you; and would have nothing appear my Advice in this, that is not already your own.

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I have often observed that the least agreeable Women have engrossed the greatest Part of the Mens Attention and Regard. They throw themselves into the way of it. The Beauty is supposed out of Reach, and she indeed places herself so, and loses half her Conquests by her Reserve; but those who have less Right to be admired, have more Ambition to it, and they cultivate the Occasions of it as much as others neglect them. If I did not know you better than to suppose you needed the Caution, I should warn you against Coldness and Indifference toward your Husband; for this is the Fault that generally opens the way to the Conquest made by a less amiable Object: But I know you love him, and that you see it as a Duty not only to do so, but to profess the doing it. Persevere, my Dear, in that Resolution; 'tis not only a Duty, but a Virtue, and it will bring you abundant Reward. This alone, my dearest ***, will set you above
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all Occasions of Jealousy; and see that you are not jealous without Occasion. Indeed you are in Person upon an Equality at least with any Woman; and this Conduct, which, if you were not, would place you so, will, as you are, give you a certain Pre-eminence. Adieu,

Yours most affectionately,

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L E T T E R V.

Of the Continuance of Affection.

I Have begun my Advice to you, my dearest***, with the ceremonial Part of a beginning married Life, and with the Obligations under which that will lay you, and the Dangers to which it will expose you. This was the proper Part of your Conduct to be first considered, because it would first offer itself to you in the acting; but these, although the most immediate, are not the greatest Concerns. There are, my Dear, Duties that

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have no Dependance upon Fashion, nor any Connexion with the Customs of any particular Time. These I shall speak of one by one, and go through with you all the Stages of the Life on which you are entered, and point out to you all the Advantages that will attend a proper Regard to them, and all the Danger that will arise from their Neglect. These things, my dearest ***, are unalterable, as the Differences between Right and Wrong, upon which they depend : And as no Time can alter, so can no Station of Life acquit you from the Attention that is due to them : these are calculated for the Advantage of the Great and Little ; the Rich and Poor alike will profit of them, or suffer for the Neglect of them ; and all the Difference of Degrees with relation to them is, that as the Wise will most see the Importance of their Observation, they will observe them most, and be the most sensible of their Advantages.

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Among the Duties between the Husband and the Wife, the first is Affection. The preserving this is the most essential of all Concerns ; for this being the Band of all the Union, on this depends the Happiness that shall attend it ; and that will not only be lost by the Neglect of it ; but it will be more and more compleat, in Proportion as the Attention to this Concern is more and more inviolable.

I would not attempt so rash a thing as to prescribe Law to those who have it not already. There is no one, and you know it, holds in so much Contempt, the general Opinion, that Persons of good Tempers will love one another after they are married, if they were indifferent before. Although I am now past the Disturbances of that Passion, I have a Remembrance of its Influence enough to let me know that it will never be where it is not voluntary and natural. And

it is for this Reason that I have differed with all our Family, and with all the Families of Prudence, as they call themselves, in the World, about those Marriages which are made by Parents, and in which those who are most concerned have no Business but Compliance.

I do assure you that this Match of yours, advantageous to you, and honourable to us as it is, would have been coolly looked upon by me, if it had been proposed to us before you heard of it ; but your Husband is of worthier Principles. He expected your Heart as the principal Part of his Agreement, and you gave it freely. I do not wonder at you, for he deserved it. I know that he possesses it entirely ; and, for your own sake, as well as for his, I hope, and I believe, he will always possess it. I would not have advised you, my Dear, to begin to love your Husband, or to try to love him ; but I do recommend it to you most fervently and most earnestly to continue
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to do so, and not to let this be a Work of Chance, but of Consideration.

You tell me, in the Fulness of your innocent and grateful Heart, that although you always loved him tenderly, he is now much dearer to you than before you was married. I do not doubt it, Child: 'tis natural it should be so; and he deserves it of you: But beware, my Dear, that you continue to love him thus as long as he deserves it. I have that Opinion of him, that, in doing this, I am assured you will love him thus for ever: But this must be from Reason, and must not ^{be} expected to happen from only Fancy, or from Accident. The Affection which has this Foundation a Breath will blow away: The Whisper of some Enemy will undermine it; or the weak Suspicion, false at it can be, of some busy Friend, destroy it.

Trust not your Happiness to such a slight Security; it is of too much Value.

lue. Hear me, my Dear, with Moderation and with Patience. Although your Husband does deserve from you all that it is possible to think that Man can deserve from Woman; yet some Part at least of your present Transport is to be attributed to Novelty. Take care that is not too much. Distinguish what Part of it is of that Origin, and be not too much given up to it. Things of little Value will charm us when they first present themselves; but all their Grace wears off upon Acquaintance. There are undoubtedly some Allowances to be made for the Newness of your present Life, among the many that you owe to its real Advantages. Distinguish these, and treat them as they are; as Flowers that charm the Senses while they are fresh, but that will quickly lose their Perfume and their Colour. 'Tis pleasing to you to have shook off the Yoke, light as it was, of Subjection to your Relations: You are charmed to be the Mistress of a Family. You owe these things to
your

your Husband, and therefore it is natural for you to be pleased with him while you remember, and while you feel them; but, my Dear, you would have owed these to any other Husband: And there is enough in him you have married that is particular for you to esteem and respect. Throw not therefore away your Attention upon things that are common. You are pleased to have a Right to the Affection of the Man whom you have chosen from all the World: This also you would have had, whosoever had been your Husband: Do not therefore let this come into the Articles of the Account of your Happiness: It is not worthy. But remember that you have a Right to the Heart of a Man of Virtue and of Honour, who does, and who will always love you; and you will then place the Advantage where you ought for your own Happiness to place it, not on the State, but on the Person; not on the having a Husband, but on the hav-

ing this Husband : and this is worthy Triumph.

You wish to preserve that Happiness which you enjoy. I have told you, that as the Foundation of it is the Affection of your Husband, the preserving that Passion will be the Means to perpetuate the Consequences. To this your own Affection firmly placed, and on all Occasions shewn to him, will be the greatest, and almost the only Step. Without this nothing can preserve it : With this there is scarce any thing can shake it.

I know this, my Dear, is your Intent, and it will be the natural Fruit of your Inclination ; but let it be also the Fruit of your Judgment. It is an unforced, an unbiassed Affection that you have to him, therefore it is natural, and there can be no great Difficulty in the continuing it. You have engaged yourself by the most solemn Ties that it shall be continued,

tinued, and therefore it is also a Duty. You have the Voice of Prudence to authorize it, and you have the Command of God to enforce it. I do not produce all these Forms of Observation because I fear that even the least of them alone would be sufficient at this time to bind you: for you now are given up totally to your Affection: But remember that there will be a Time, when that which now charms with its Novelty will be familiar: When there may be Accidents to shake it, that do not now offer; and that it will then be a Time when it is less able to resist them. Establish it, my Dear, as it ought to be now, and it will not be then overthrown. Remember that the Love which Marriage authorises, and which it should inspire, is not a Flight of idle Fancy, wild, irregular, and uncertain: It must be firm, perfect, and inviolable: It must be the Fruit of Consideration, as well of Imagination; and it must be known as a Virtue, as well as a Compliance. Convince yourself at this time, my Dear,

how closely and how firmly you are united. That you have made yourselves Possessors of one Fortune, and that you ought to have but one Inclination, and one Heart. Remember that it is not a cold Esteem alone that your Husband has a Right to expect from you; that he might have claimed, and that he might have enjoyed as a Friend or an Acquaintance: He has given you himself, his Fortune, and his Love, and what is it that he asks you in return? Yours. He requires no more of you, and that neither Gratitude nor Reason can withhold from him. The Price he has paid is great, and he must have what he has purchased. The Manner in which he solicits it, deserves, were there no other Motive, to succeed, and he must not be disappointed.

It is your Love that he expects, and that he merits. You tell me that he has it: Let him never doubt of this. It was your Duty, before you married,
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to be reserved; but that Reserve, which was then a Virtue, would be now a Fault. There is a Merit in a well-placed Affection, and there is Praise in that Openness of Mind which owns it. All that endearing Tendernefs that your Heart feels toward him, let your Tongue be ready to exprefs. He is generous, he is grateful, and he loves you: You cannot know what Transport fuch a Man muft feel from fuch Acknowledgments; but you may be affured from me, that it will bind him to you for ever.

There is no Advice that I can give you, my dear ***, but muft be understood within its proper Regulations. All that you can beftow upon him of this gentle and this elegant Affection, is not too much; but it muft be only to his own Ear that you deliver it. While your Heart burns for him at every Moment, while you idolize him, while you doat upon him, preferve the Modesty of your Sex in Public; and let no one,

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no not your most intimate Acquaintance be in the Secret of your Heart otherwise than by your general Declarations. As nothing is so honourable to a Wife as Fondness of her Husband when alone, nothing is so unbecoming when there are Witnesses to it. 'Tis an Offence against your Company, and it may be suspected by your Husband, because you may have Designs in it, and may do it to obtain a Character, which to you may seem, altho' it is not so in Reality, an amiable one. There is nothing which ought to set a Woman so low with her Husband as this prostituted Fondness; there is nothing that will set her so low in the Eye of the World. That which is thus ostentatious, may be affected; that which is secret, must be real.

You are happy in having a Husband not deficient in Understanding. This is one, but indeed what is not one, of those Incidents in which you will have Proof of it. There are Men of that weak Turn, that they expect this avowed

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Tendernefs of a Wife, and have a Pride in fhewing others that a Woman of Virtue has a Fondnefs for them : But this is not your Cafe. He who is, and who, I hope, and I perfuade myfelf will be, always happy with you, thinks with more Juftice and Propriety. He knows this is a Circumftance which concerns himfelf alone, and he will wifh to poffefs the Senfe of it to himfelf. 'Tis happy that, in order to pleafe him, nothing is required of you but what you will chufe to do ; but it is thus in all things where People of Senfe and Virtue have to deal with one another.

I have entered at large into the Reafon of this important Admonition, becaufe you wifh to be convinced, not barely to be told what is right ; and, being convinced, I know that you will be unfhaken in your Obfervance. Be complaifant, but be indifferent to your Husband in Public : In Company be civil, but not free. This will not only obtain you
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Respect from him, as well as from all that see you ; but it will give a double Force to those Endearments which you are ready, which you are eager to bestow, when you are alone together. You are to know, my dearest ***, that Love, however the Notion may be exploded among the weak and the unhappy People of the present time, is yet the true, lasting, and the only Source of Happiness to the married. 'Tis said that it will create Love in the Person to whom it is directed, even if he had nothing of it before ; but this I doubt. I have my particular Thoughts concerning that Passion. But however this may be, it concerns not you. You do not want to create, but to preserve, Affection ; and you will easily know that which could do the one, will do the other.

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L E T.

LETTER VI.

On Weaknesses of Temper.

ALthough I have recommended it to you, my dearest ***, to have the first and greatest Care upon the Subject of that Affection which first united you and your worthy Husband; I do not mean that this Consideration should swallow up all others. Though I have mentioned it to you as a first Care, I do not mean to place it as the only Object of your Attention. This is the Principal; but there are a thousand others, and those not less certain in their Effects, although those Effects are of less immediate Importance. Take care of all things; the Object of your Concern deserves that Care, and will repay it: But these in particular have this farther Claim to your Notice, that without them the other cannot subsist. You will ask what are they? There are many, and you shall know them all. I only awake your At-
tention

tention first, that you may not pass them over with a careless Eye, or think them Trifles.

I have always spoken of your Husband as a Man of an excellent Temper; but I do not mean by this that he is perfect. No Man is so. All Tempers, and all Dispositions have their Weaknesses; nor is he without his. Perhaps I have not discovered what it is; perhaps there are several, and I have seen but one of them. You know him better. You will have Opportunities of studying him more. Do it; for it is of Importance.

Observe from time to time what are the Faults of your own Temper, and while you are upon your Guard to correct these, see whether he also have the same. Regard the Faults of other Persons Tempers who are of his Age and Rank, consider which of them, if any of them, are his. When you have discovered this, do not look upon him the worse

worse for it. I tell you, you yourself, and I, and all People, are subject to them. I do not bid you enquire into them to lessen your Esteem; but to guard your Peace.

There is one general Foible in all People of your Age and his. I think you are less subject to it than any body that I know; and I am not, upon my Knowledge, able to say that he has much of it; but yet it is universal: it is a Disposition easily ruffled and disconcerted. According to the Degree in which People possess this Weakness, they have the Title of being passionate, or of being peevish. Both these are Characters which I hope neither of you do, or ever will, possess; for they are very faulty. But something approaching toward these; something on the Foundation of which these Extremes are built, is natural to all young People, and is the unavoidable Fruit of Inexperience. If you find any thing approaching toward this in yourself,

self, correct and get the better of it in time; for there is nothing that will so certainly estrange and alienate the Affection of your Husband from you. His Temper is not at all of less Consequence to you than your own, and you must study it as carefully. If you see any Tendency to this in him, be careful on every Occasion to attempt the weaning him from it. And do this not by Advice (for Men do not willingly receive that from Women) but by Example. Let him see, whenever you are tempted to be hasty, that you get the better of it, that it may not give him Uneasiness; let him see how you do it; and on this Occasion, though I do not think it adviseable for you to be too free in praising yourself; yet, on this Occasion, I would advise you to do it. He will see your Conduct is truly amiable; and he will not only see that it is easy, but that it is agreeable, to follow the Example,

I do not prescribe this, my Dearest, as regarding your Conduct toward one another ; for I should be very much concerned to hear that you had ever gone so far as to need an Apology, or even to need the Caution I have mentioned with regard to what has passed between yourselves ; but let your Family, your Friends, and your Acquaintance afford the Opportunities. Advice, even in this cautious Garb of Example, when it concerns yourselves, is brought too home : And, while you may be in the right in proposing your own Conduct as a Pattern, there is some Degree of Superiority assumed, and some Degree of Reproach conveyed in the Example. Let him see your affable and your prudent Behaviour toward others in things which might have given Offence, or which might have occasioned Disgust, and he will honour and esteem you for it. He will know, by this, how very cautious you will be of taking Offence at any thing that might
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be made a Ground of it in him ; and he will see the Conduct in so amiable a Light, that he will in secret resolve to imitate it. This is all you have to wish : Expect him not to make Professions ; it is beneath him to do so : and those who do it break them.

Here, my dearest ***, is before you the plain, the palpable, and the certain Way to prevent the least Approach to Dissatisfactions between you ; and 'tis impossible that you should know how much depends upon your carefully pursuing it. Dread like the severest Mischief the first Uneasiness that may happen between you and your Husband ; for it is such. No matter how little it be ; 'tis something : And things, when they have once got Footing, easily increase. There is a Pride in never having disagreed ; preserve and support it. 'Twill be of all Guards the greatest against falling into the Error.

You

You who have no Vices (for I am sure you have none, and I could almost say I am sure that he has none) can find no other way of displeasing one another but by some little Difference of this kind. Pride is the Root of all this; get the better of that first: And dread as well as hate Obstinacy in Opinion in yourself, as much as you would dread it in him. Remember that in Trifles it matters not which is right, which wrong, if your Opinions differ; and it is only in Trifles that they can differ. Remember that it is worth while to give up a thousand of these Mistakes (for you may be sure your Opinions will generally be Mistakes when you differ from your Husband) rather than to run the least Risque of giving him Offence. By this cautious Conduct you will make him cautious: He will love you for the Care you shew to please him, and he will return it in an equal Care to give you Pleasure. Suppose that you were in the right; it is not likely,
but

but suppose it was so, it will not please him that you make him own it; and what is the Triumph, in Proportion to the Satisfaction! Is it not better to be in the wrong, and to have him not displeased about it?

These, my dearest ***, are the Rules by which you will avoid the making the least Approaches toward a Disagreement; and by which you will improve his Conduct as well as your own, and obviate all the probable Means that might lead to the least Appearance of it on his Part. But though you will, by this, obviate all the probable, you will, neither by this, nor by any other Method, prevent all the possible Occasions of such Approaches toward it as may alarm you. Do not suppose by this, my Dear, that I reflect upon the Temper of your Husband, as not so good as your own. I protest to you, that in this, as in all other Cautions which regard Offence on his Side, I speak of Mankind in general
when

when I mention him. You have no Concerns, but what are also his; nor are there any Subjects of your Conversation in which he is not included. But 'tis not so on the other Part: He has a thousand things to regard, with which you have no Concern; and these, unknown to you, may disturb and ruffle his Temper. Accidents in his Affairs, or a thousand other Occurrences, which his very Love for you will make him keep wholly from your Knowledge, may disorder him; and when his Mind is discomposed by these, or when it is but much employed by them, his Inattention, or his Disregard to what is said on some trifling Occasion, may amount to Peevishness.

Here, my dearest ***, is a new Scene in which you are to act; and it will require all the Address and all the Composure which are within the Command of your Temper, and of your Understanding. I have hitherto mentioned these little Differences and Dissatisfactions

as what you were to foresee, and being acquainted with what are their general Occasions, to prevent. You now see them in the Light of present and begun; no matter how very little they are, no matter how trivial the Beginning. Any Distaste, any Beginning is too much, and according to your own Management, for now it lies wholly with you, will become a thing of the greatest Importance, or it will shrink to nothing. He who is pettish at a Trifle, because his Mind is discomposed, will, for the same Reason, be exceptionous at the least Notice of it. He is uneasy, and therefore he feels what is not, will he not therefore be alarmed at any thing that is ?

If you find your Husband, my dearest
 ***, at any time, or on any Occasion,
 discomposed, attribute it not to any
 thing in yourself, or your own Conduct;
 for I know that will not be the Occasion,
 since it will not give him any: Under-
 stand it as the Effect of some cross Acci-
 dent,

dent, which his Affection, not to give you Pain, keeps from your Knowledge. Thus will your own conscious Innocence give him no Occasion of Suspicion. If it be possible, let him not see that you discover this: But remember what it is, and what is the Occasion, and you will know what you owe to him who will not make you Partner in his Uneasinesses, and how you ought to behave to him whose Disquiet carries such Claim to your Concern.

If you see him in general only thoughtful and discomposed, understand this as the Occasion: And if at any time a peevish Word drop from him, assure yourself this is its Origin. Do not enquire why he speaks so; do not seem to know that he does; but in your own Behaviour do every thing to sooth and to compose his Temper. I have convinced you that he deserves this from you, and it will succeed. He will see your Tendernefs and Affection a Balm for every Wound

of adverse Fortune; your Love a Compensation for every unlucky Incident that may occur to him.

It is a Custom, too general a one with Wives, when the Man they love, or but pretend to love, appear uneasy, to speak of it, to press to know the Reason, and to solicit every Article of an Explanation; but though this is universal, it is wrong: Nothing can be more wrong. If the Cause of his Silence be from the generous Principle I have told you, he will be made more uneasy by the Sollicitation, and 'tis a Pain that ought not be given him: If otherwise, he has his Reasons for his Silence; or be it but his Fancy, 'tis no Crime. He has a Right to what Conduct pleases him, and it will make him peevish to oppose it. The same Cautions, and from the same Reasons, plead against the urging an Explanation of any pettish Word that may by Chance drop from him. Do not deceive yourself so far, my Dear, as
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to suppose it is always Affection which dictates this idle and ungrateful Importunity : Even if it were from Affection ; 'tis an ill Fruit of it ; but, in general, 'tis merely Curiosity. This is prevalent in all of us by Nature ; but 'tis a Source of universal Evil. Beware of it in all things, my Dear ; but in nothing be more ware of it than in this.

The Writers on Morality have said, in their Cautions against this Source of Disquiet in the married Life, that the Husband and Wife should never be both angry together ; that when one is out of Temper, the other should be silent. But this is talking in the general : 'Tis right, 'tis wise, and it was perhaps as much as a Recluse locked up in his Study could arrive to know ; but those who live among the World are acquainted with a thousand Delicacies unknown to those remote Observers. There is a Manner in doing things, in which as much consists as in the doing them : And 'tis not sufficient

that People are told what they are to do unless they are informed withal in what way they are to do it. I have added what must be Practice to their Speculation; and I have pointed out to you every Step toward Uneasiness, and every Step toward preventing it. Observe them, my dearest Child; you will owe to the Observance more than you at present can suppose. I speak from Experience, and I would make the Fruit of that Experience yours.

You have heard that *Virtue is its own Reward*, and there is a great deal of Truth in the Sentence; but Virtue, and every Step I have been prescribing to you, is Virtue in a certain Degree; is not only a Reward unto itself, but it brings many Rewards with it. It is a sufficient Satisfaction to good Persons to know that they have done their Duty, and that will be your Satisfaction in Consequence of a Conduct of this kind. But that is not all: You will not only have obtained,

tained, by this, your own Approbation, but the Esteem of your Husband. Although you mean no Shew of the Goodness of your Behaviour, he will see it. Although you make no Boast of your Concern, or your Affection, he will discover it all ; and he will be the more satisfied of it, because it is of his own discovering. That which is boasted may be affected, or pretended ; silent Virtue is always real. He will not only esteem you for this, but he will love you the more. Perhaps, in the Fulness of his Heart, he will tell you that he saw it ; that he was wrong, and that he reverences you for the Behaviour that bore with his Faults, and that reclaimed him. You will indeed have Reason to rejoice ; nay, it is just to triumph in this ; but it will be in secret. There is no Answer fit for you to make on such an Occasion. You must be silent.

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L E T T E R VII.

On Disputes upon trivial Occasions.

I Have said to you, my dearest ***, all that my Heart could dictate, and all that my Experience could inform me on the Subject of those Weaknesses of Temper, which even the best are liable to, and which therefore you must expect to find in the Person with whom you are to spend your Life. If I have seemed to make little things too important in this Consideration, it is my Care for you, my Dear, that has enlarged them; but be assured that all that Encrease is owing to nothing more than this, that, considering in what Manner they might affect your Youth and Inexperience, I have seen them not only in their present Form, but in their Consequences. This is a way those who are acquainted with the World have of judging, and you will one time fall into it.

If

If I have cautioned you against the Causes and Springs of those Disagreements which render the Lives of so many married Persons unhappy with an Earnestness not proportioned to the things themselves, surely it has been not at all too great for the guarding you against those Disagreements. Keep, I intreat you, my Dear, all those Admonitions in your Mind, and you will avoid a thousand Disputes into which others would have fallen. But though I am assured you will, by this Means, escape so many Dangers, I do not suppose it a Certainty that you will be free from all. I look upon human Nature, under the strictest Regulations, as too imperfect to admit of Security; and I think it possible, although I hope it is unlikely, that, after all this Care, you may be unhappy enough to fall into some idle Misunderstanding, I shall think myself to have performed but half my Charge, if I leave you at a Loss how to heal the Breach,

which I had taken so much Pains to tell you how to avoid.

As I am conscious neither of you will do any thing ill, I shall take it as a Certainty that if ever any Dispute or Disagreement arise between you, it will be about a Trifle. A thousand things may happen to occasion a Dissatisfaction of this kind; but there is only one that can foment or can preserve it, this is Obstinacy. I know, my Dear, how much of this there is in human Nature; I know how much of it there is in my own Sex; and therefore I cannot give too much Caution against it. If ever an angry Word should have been returned, I intreat you, for every thing depends upon it, to consider what it is you are going to say before you speak the third.

Yours, my dear ***, is the time at which Instruction is not thrown away: 'Tis just at the Period in which we now are that it can be of Use. 'Tis impossible
often

often to reconcile those whose Happiness depends upon the Reconciliation; this also is a Fruit of Obstinacy, and as it is impossible to be done, it is idle to attempt it: But 'tis easy, at least I hope it is so with Minds like yours, to prevent it, and therefore I advise you. The Matter is of so much Importance, that I cannot be too punctual in doing it. 'Tis for this Reason that I enter so minutely into every Circumstance; and that I so often break from the Thread of my Advice upon particular Heads for general Cautions. Perhaps I am tedious; but, my Dear, forgive me. I do not think it too much Labour to write, do not you think it much to read it.

But I will return to my Advice. I have observed it must be about some Trifle that you dispute with your Husband, if ever you dispute with him; and remember what it is that this Trifle may cost you; his Good-will, and your Peace for Life. Is it worth while, my Dear, to

run the Venture? To be sure it is not. Give it up at once, whatsoever it be, and avoid a Danger that is so disproportioned. This will make an Advantage even out of the thing that threatened you; for he will know that he was in the wrong sooner from your submitting, than for your defending the Point, because he will be sooner cool; and, when he does so, he will love you the more. Whether he suppose that your Diffidence of your own Opinion, when opposed to his, would not let you find that he was so; or whether, finding it, you placed your Affection so much higher than the Discovery, that you neglected to boast of it. When you are calm, your Husband will always find he has been wrong in saying that which might displease you. His Sense of this is all that can be necessary to your Happiness. Do not expect, or wish him to confess so much; that is not easy; it is of no Consequence, and it will put him out of Temper.

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There is no trifling Dispute that will not be lost as soon as it appeared under the Influence of such a Conduct; and is not this a most desirable Certainty? What Wish could you propose to yourself so much to your Advantage as the never while you live having the least Disgust with your Husband? And this will give it you. What is it that you sacrifice to purchase this? Obstinacy. 'Tis nothing more. A thing you are ashamed of, and that gives Pain to the Person who possesses it, as much as to the Person against whom it is preserved.

This, my dearest ***, is the Consequence of conquering that Perverseness of Temper which might keep alive a Quarrel. Let us consider what could be the End of indulging it, and keeping up the Dispute. While it subsisted you would make your Husband uneasy; and this the more, the more he loves you. Can you wish to do this? Can you desire

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to give Pain to a Person who is kind to you ; or can you be so ungenerous as to take Pleasure in seeing that Pain, when you know it is the Effect of that Affection ? But supposing Pride, or Obstinacy, or be it what it will, that is the mischievous Cause, could get the better of this Consideration, which yet with you I am assured it cannot ; supposing this could happen, yet after all the Neglect with which this would be to treat the Peace of one who ought to be dear to you, would you have no Respect unto your own ? You may be assured, my Dear, that the Wife cannot be easy, while she gives her Husband Pain. Their Hearts are one, and so must be their Thoughts, if either are to be happy. She who gives Uneasiness to her Husband, gives double Misery to herself ; and to what Purpose would you do this ? What would you (but I should not say you, my Dear, for it will never happen to you) but what would such a Woman expect or hope to gain by her Spirit and her

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Obstinacy? Is it the Victory? To what Purpose? What is the Matter whether the one or the other be right in a thing which is of no Consequence? Is it worth while, in the Pursuit of this, to hazard even the least Consideration in the World, much less the greatest? Would she wish to have her Husband own that she was right? To what End? That he may acknowledge she is the wiser. There is no Praise in this; for it is not her Province. There is no Credit to the Wife in conquering in such a Dispute; but there is vast Disgrace, at least it will appear so to himself, for the Husband to submit; and he will never be upon the Terms of Friendship afterward.

Is it explained? Does it appear to you, my Dear, that the Continuance of a Dispute with a Husband is always Disquiet to the Wife; and that it may be her Destruction at last, if the Loss of her Husband's Affection can deserve that Name; and that there can be no Pleasure

sure in the Attempt, nor Pride in the Acquisition of the Victory? I hope it does: If so, you see, my Dear, the way to avoid it all: Observe it..

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LETTER VIII.

On Quarrels.

I Would hardly suppose, my dearest *** , that, after what I have been observing on the Subject of little Disputes, and their not little Consequences, you will ever be in Danger of falling into greater. When I have told you how easy it is to avoid them, and how important it is that you should avoid them, I cannot suppose it probable that you will ever contradict my Opinion of your hearing Reason, and being guided by it; but, my Dear, when your Welfare is concerned, I would be attentive even to what cannot happen, and would guard you against Impossibilities.

I will suppose, though it is but for supposing sake, that you have let some little wayward Pettishness get the better of your Prudence, and that you have answered peevishly to something peevish; for in all this I suppose your Husband in the blame, since that is setting all above Dispute, and pointing out your Conduct in the most difficult Article; the rest is easy: Let us suppose then that he has been cross, and that, instead of Silence or Gentleness of Words, you have answered him perversely, what will be the natural Consequence? Were he a weak Man, he would be louder and more violent; and he would keep alive the Argument to shew you that he would have the Victory: But your Husband, my Dear, has Understanding. All these things that I have been saying to you will be dictated to him by his own Prudence; and he will see the wrong Step that you have both taken in its true Light, and be uneasy at the Consequences.

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He will stop the Dispute, and, to avoid farther Uneasiness, he will get up to go out. I do not think it is to your Advantage that he should leave the House in Displeasure with you, and yet it is not easy to prevent it. There is a Conduct, my dearest ***, that will yet restore all: 'Tis the same that would have prevented all at first, and it is never too late to do what is right. If it be possible to get the better of a foolish Obstinacy, tell him at once you are sensible that you have done wrong, and all is at once over. This is the wisest Course; but I am sensible, my Dear, 'tis difficult. If this be too much for that false Spirit which has made the Breach to submit to at once, desire him not to go; but by no Means attempt to hinder him otherwise than by Entreaties. I know it would be natural, between the Struggles of Love and Rage in the first Difference, to throw yourself between him and the Door, to fix upon his Hand, or by a thousand other Methods to oppose

pose his going; but these are wrong, they are dangerous: Remember he has his Obstinacy as well as you, and he will not be conquered. 'Tis inflaming things in the most fatal Manner to attempt it. Entreaties may stop him, but this cannot; and, if they fail, you will have Opportunities, while he is gone, to recollect how much you have been to blame; and his Absence, if it be of no Use to him, will be of so much to you, that you will know your Error, and repent it.

I know you will, if ever this should happen, be distressed, alarmed, and terrified in the highest Degree; and it is fit you should be so: 'Twill be a Punishment not at all too great for the Fault which brought it on, and it will prevent a Repetition of the Fault again; after this I am to tell you that all your Alarms and Fears are groundless. Fancy not that he leaves you to visit your Relations with Complaints, to mix in some gay
Party,

Party, or indulge in some Debauch. He will employ the Moments better ; he will revolve the Occasions of the Dispute ; he will foresee the Consequences ; and without any other Communication than that with his own Mind, he will resolve against all Occasions of a like Dissatisfaction. His Stay will be short, and he will return perfectly desirous to be reconciled. Your Conduct then is easy. I have told you in what Temper, and with what Thoughts he will return. You will know how you are to meet him ; both have had Opportunities to recollect ; both have been convinced by that Recollection how wrong you have been in every preceding Step ; both wish it had not happened : What is there that remains then but that you both forget. Meet him, my Dear, at his Return, as if you had done nothing to displease him, nor had been displeased in any thing. This is the prudent Method, and there will be the Pain of Apologies prevented, the Remembrance lost for ever ; except
that

that in each of your Breasts in secret there will live so much of it as to prevent a new Occasion of Disquiet. In this understand me properly, my Dear: I do not mean that you should run with all the Chearfulness of an expecting Joy to meet him: Let it not seem that what has given him Pain has had so little Effect upon you: Let your Looks say that that you have considered, and are sorry, although your Tongue speak nothing: Meet him with all the Satisfaction that could attend a Reconciliation; but name no Word of it.

Let me, for I am all this time speaking of what are nearly Impossibilities, let me add a Consideration yet more remote from all Degrees of Probability; yet let me name it to you, my Dear, as if it might happen. Let me suppose your Husband less sensible of the Folly of such a Disagreement than yourself; let me suppose him of more Obstinacy in his Temper; and that, after a longer Stay
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than he ought to have made from you, that he return less satisfied: Let me suppose him fullenly silent, and disregarding of you. The Circumstance is painful, and to you, who have been bred tenderly, it will be the more terrible. You must remember, my Dear, that your Indiscretion has given Occasion to what you suffer; nay, let me speak freely, that it has deserved it, at least in some Degree, and you must bear it as your Punishment.

Heaven forbid, my dearest ***, that I should ever see this in Reality; but, to talk of things as if they happened, let us consider what you should do. You would suffer too much already by the Dispute to think of inflaming it. You would now thoroughly wish it over, and be ready to abjure all future Peevishness, could this be overlooked. Remember, my Dear, your Husband loves you tenderly. I do not suppose a Circumstance like this could ever happen to you, because it cannot happen but by Faults of
which

which I know you never will be guilty : but if it should have chanced, you would discover that it was because he loved you that he was so offended. We regard Offences, my dear Child, not in Proportion to their own Weight, so much as to the Value in which we held the Person that is guilty of them ; therefore a Trifle from you, whom he esteems and loves, will give more Pain than all that could be offered from a Person whom he disregarded. When you have thus far understood the Nature of your own Fault, and of his Resentment, you will not urge him farther.

All that he can expect from you, let him esteem you ever so much to blame, is to be sensible of it, and to be sorry that it has happened. You will be both, and there will be no Difficulty to let him see you are. The Hour of Perverseness may last till Night ; but if you have entreated with less Eagerness a Reconciliation till then, be more sollicitous, more earnest
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in it then, and dread to sleep in Unforgiveness. What you have solicited in vain before, you will perhaps now find it easy to obtain; and do not omit to request it tenderly. Love, my dearest ***, is the Band of your Friendship; Love is the proper Healer of all Breaches. Its Power is not limited to preserving Amity; there is scarce any Danger that can threaten; but that is less than may be said; there is not any Wound it can receive, but Love will obviate, or Love will heal. Let it not appear in the least Account, or in the lightest Article of your Behaviour, that your Affection has at all suffered Violence. Let that shew itself intire, and look down upon all little Animosities as beneath its Concern. Let your Tenderness, that real Tenderness which you have so often gloried in to me, mix itself with every Sentiment: Let that give a gentle Softness to all you say, and communicate its peaceful Influence to even the minutest Incident. You will prevail. The Disagreement has been
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but of a few Hours ; it has been about a Trifle ; he will see you look on it as over, and it will be forgotten.

I know I am not to explain myself to you on the Word, when I remind you that Love will be an Overmatch for all the Perverseness of Mind that he can have taken up on whatsoever Occasion, who is the Object of it. I do not mean that Love to the Companion or Acquaintance, which every one possesses, and looks upon as great ; I do not mean that Mixture of Affection and Esteem which we call Friendship ; I do not mean that reverend Affection which the Child has for its Parent ; or that earnest Fondness, passionate and tender as it is, which the Parent expresses for his Child. These are in their proper Sphere, powerful and great ; but these are not the Passion you will feel, and which will be your Passport through all Dangers and all Difficulties in this Road of Marriage. I mean that Passion which you conceived for him

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whom you have married before you knew him perfectly; heightened, improved, compleated by the Esteem, the Gratitude, and Tendernefs with which it now looks upon him, as Friend, Patron, and Benefactor. This is the Passion I would be understood to mean; and this, my dear ***, none better knows than you in its full Force, and in its greateft Extent. This is the Passion, which, while your Peace is dear to you, you must cherish in your Heart. This, which exceeds by infinite Degrees all that is called Love between other Persons: This, which you know, strengthened by Virtue, and authorized as a Duty, is worthy of another Name; and is too great for one that is so trifled with.

This Passion, my dearest ***, will teach you that your Husband's Peace and Pleasure are as much yours as his: Will you not then be grieved that you have wounded the one, or interrupted the other? You will feel it; and your own Interest alone would prompt you to atone
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for the Offence, and heal the Breach. Let it not enter once into your Thought who was to blame: Whoever began the Folly, both were to blame, since both continued it: But your Care is of your own Conduct. Have no Eye to see the Fault your Husband has committed; but employ all your Vigilance to discover, and all your Affiduity to amend your own. I will not believe it possible; for it is not in Nature that a first Quarrel, and that about a Trifle, can be beyond the Reach of such a Remedy. I will suppose it past, atoned, repented on both Sides, and forgotten; but, dearest ***, be cautious of a second. The first was difficult to remedy, this may be incurable,

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L E T T E R IX.

On Inconstancy.

I Do persuade myself, my dearest ***, that I have mentioned to you all the little Foibles of your Mind, all the Weaknesses to which your Temper may be liable, and in them all the Errors (for I will not call them by so coarse a Name as Faults) that it is possible you can fall into. I have shewn you their Consequences, and I have shewn them truly. I know you will have a Guard upon yourself, and will avoid them: But this is not all I have to mention to you. There may be Foibles, and there may be, in Consequence of these Foibles, Errors in your Husband also; and as the Custom of the World gives greater Liberty to Men, they may be greater.

These, my dearest ***, will require as much of your Prudence to subdue

as

as your own ; they will be, believe me, almost as much within the Influence of your Prudence ; and you need not be told they are as much your Concern. I have cautioned you by all the gentle Means that can be thought of, to endeavour to get the better of that Danger, of those many Dangers let me say, which attend that free Use of Wine among Men, which a bad Custom has authorized and made too universal. Among the Dangers to which it exposes Men, I have told you that the most formidable Attack, is made in the Point which of all others will affect you most, their Constancy to the Marriage-Bed. Many a Man, whose sober Thoughts detest and abhor the Violation, has been led into it by this Folly, by the unjustifiable and cruel Persuasions and Example of the Company. I have given you my Sentiments as to the Methods you may and ought to take to prevent such an Incident : But that I may not leave you unprepared for any Part of the

Conduct of a good Wife, let us suppose it has already happened.

Let us imagine that, lost in the Effects of Wine, and led by the Follies of his Company, he has been false to your Bed, and you have heard of it. What is to be your Reception of such mortifying Intelligence? Let Passion counsel you, and Rage will be the Result; Anger, Upbraidings, Tears, Reproaches. But to what End, my Dearest, and how authorized? Let Passion guide others, but do you listen to a better Monitor, to Reason. You are informed that he has wronged you in this tender Point; you wish he had not, and you wish he would not again. This is Reason. He has been guilty of it under the Intoxication of Wine, would you have him repeat it sober? Certainly no. Avoid then the things which might urge him to it; and do not, in resenting a lesser Evil, bring on yourself a greater.

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Consider first what you may naturally suppose his Sentiments, before you enter into any Resolutions of your own. Men despise Vice, altho' it favours their Designs: They reverence Virtue that repulses them. What then must not be the Preference which they give unto complying Virtue. This is the Wife's great Charm, and this will hold of Force for ever. 'Tis almost certain that he abhors the Person who has shared his Crime; and that, in Comparifon of you, she is unworthy of a farther Thought. If this be the Cafe, all that you wifh is done, and what would you attempt farther. Be filent, forget that it has happened; you may; for he will not forget it. The Offence will appear the more unpardonable in him for your Goodnefs, and he will not repeat it. There is infinite Difference, my Dear, between the Error of having been once drawn into an Act of Infidelity by Sollicitations and againft the Inclination, at a Time too when the very

Faculties were overpowered, and the coolly, voluntarily, and by Design engaging in an Amour. I own, my Dear, that the Offence is great, with all its Palliations. I know, that, to a Woman who doats upon her Husband, the least Wrong of this kind must be the Source of a thousand Anxieties ; but things, my dearest ***, are what they are, only by Comparison ; and if you will view this in the Light of that Comparison, the Grounds of which I have given you, it will appear almost nothing.

Those who speak of things only in the general, may call a concerted Scheme of Intrigue, and a single Escape from Chastity by the same Name ; but you, my Dear, who would shudder, and with Reason, at the Thought of the Man whom you love and honour, and the being beloved by whom is your greatest and your most rational Happiness, preferring another to you, solliciting her by an unwearied Affiduity, neglecting
you

you during that Affiduity, and expending his Fortune in the Attempt; you will see, I observe, my Dear, an infinite Difference between this and an Act of Chance, unpremeditated, and never to be repeated.

The Custom of the World renders the least Escape from Virtue on the Woman's Part unpardonable; but Men constitute the World, and make its Customs. Yet we may pardon this, since 'tis a Regard to us that is its Foundation. No Apology to Extenuation is allowed in Favour of a Woman: To offend once, is as bad as to have been criminal for ever. Prostitution is Prostitution, under whatever Circumstances; and that being once violated, which owed its Worth to its being held inviolable, the Source of Esteem is never to be recovered; and Love without Esteem, my Dearest, is not the Passion for a Wife, but for a Harlot.

You have been taught to look upon the Chastity of Woman in this Light, and it is fit that it should be seen in no other; for not only the Custom of the World, but Reason itself places it there. But, my Dear, you are not to set the Virtue of Men upon the same Foundation. I do not say that Reason makes it otherwise; but Custom, which, in many things, is as powerful as Reason, and in this more powerful, has established it so. But we are not to see the Whole in so disadvantageous and unfair a Light as it might appear upon this View. As the Men have some Palliation for a Fault of Inadvertency, they have a thousand different Temptations to it: We, who are reckoned, and who ought to be reckoned, unpardonable, if we transgress, have none of these Allurements, nor are in the way of any of their Hazards. We do not drink, we do not indulge ourselves in loose Talk, nor do

we commemorate the Names of Objects of Prostitution, as they do over their Glasses; Names of Persons known to be wicked, and who are always at hand to be so. We keep no Company with the Dissolute and the Abandoned, and consequently we have none of the Temptations to Ill that Examples throw into their way. If we see in Public an unfortunate Woman, who has but one Slip in her Conduct, we see her pointed at and avoided. On the contrary, if a Man appears, who is supposed to have passed a Life of Prostitution, he is not the less caressed even by our own Sex, though I think this much to their Shame, but he appears to all Persons an agreeable Character.

This is the Prejudice of Custom; and, as you cannot cure this Prejudice, my Dear, you must, like all the rest of the World, submit to it. But though you cannot be a Reformer of all Mankind, your Beauty and your Goodness,

will, I make no doubt, be able to continue your Husband in the good Sentiments he has already, and this is all you have to care about. I have named an Escape from Goodness like to this, as possible to happen to him, because he is a Man ; but I think it scarcely possible, as he is your Husband. Your Image will be so fixed and rooted in his Breast, that it will leave no Room for any other there. Your Affection will place the venal Fondness of the Prostitute, if ever he should fall into such Company, in the most mean and abject Light: And his Love, joined with his Esteem for you, will keep his Faith inviolable.

I would guard you against every Error that it is possible can have Place in the Conduct of a Wife; and in that Light I am obliged to represent to you every Situation in which it is possible for a Husband to be placed. I carry this Consideration no farther, since I am assured

fured that more cannot concern you. The virtuous Husband of a virtuous, and affectionate, and an agreeable Wife, may, under the Infatuations I have named, be led into a single and an accidental Folly; but he can never give Place to another Passion, or engage seriously and thinkingly in the Pursuit of another Love.

You will doubt of this perhaps when you see Faults of this kind in Men, whose Wives appear to you compleatly agreeable. But, my Dear, you are to know, that such Wives either appear to you in a better Light than they ought, in a better Light than they can, to the discerning Eye of their Husbands, or else that those Faults in the Husband are the Fruit of Faults in themselves; of Passion and Resentment indulged at the Expence of Prudence; of those Mistakes in the Conduct of a married Life, which are too natural to a young Wife, even to one of virtuous Principles, and against which my dearest ***, I am therefore
arming

arming you by Example, as well as by Admonition.

You will remember, my Dear, that your Husband's Affection to you is the great Guard against his thinking of another. You will remember that this Affection, although it were first inspired by your Form, can only be supported and kept up by your Conduct. This is a Lesson of all others the most important to a Wife, and yet what Wife regards it? Let us suppose the same Fault in the Husband of a less prudent Wife which I have mentioned as possible in yours. I have shewn you how you will prevent its ever being repeated; and I am certain that what I have said will be found true in Practice. Instead of that silent Concern and tempered Uneasiness with which you will have received the Offender, we will suppose her flying out into Resentments and Reproaches, despising his Acknowledgment of his Fault, and disregarding his Assurances that he will not repeat it.

What

What is the Consequence? The Husband, who, in Consciousness of his Fault, would have been patient under some Reproof, is out of Temper with the Continuance of it: He thinks that, in acknowledging his Error, he has atoned for it: He thinks that, in the Promise of not repeating it, he has deserved that it should be forgotten. He may have appeared faulty to himself at first; but his Wife appears faulty to him now. He is out of Temper in his turn; Home is uneasy to him; the Behaviour of his Wife is disagreeable; he remembers the Fondness of the Prostitute, which he had at first recollected with Contempt, as having some Merit in it under the Comparison of this unquiet Scene. He returns to her. He had at first been criminal only through Inadvertence, he repeats it now on Choice. In the Place of an angry Wife, he has a Person whose Good-humour he can purchase at a moderate Price, and he continues with her. This is not all; he will be tired, you say:

say : He will so ; for where there is not Virtue and true Affection, the Passion is not Love, and it will soon wear off. But what is the Consequence ? He is fatiated : He distastes the Person and the Behaviour of this purchased Mistress : But whither shall he go ? Shall it be home ? What, to fresh Quarrels, and louder Reproaches ? No ; he looks upon Peace as sacrificed there, and therefore he seeks not after it : He gives it up, and, in that Resignation, he does indeed destroy it for ever,

He will leave this despised Mistress ; he will not return to an injured and an enraged Wife ; he goes to some other. The Fence of Virtue and of Reserve is broken down, and there is nothing to oppose him. He feels a Pleasure in Variety ; Novelty has irresistible Charms. He can visit no public Place, but he fancies himself in a Seraglio ; a Multitude are at his Service, and he drops the Handkerchief where he pleases. He
stops

stops not till he has been the Round of all, unless some Accident prevent him. 'Tis almost a Million to one but his Constitution and his Fortune become impaired in the highest Degree during the Scene of Prostitution. But even this is not the greatest Fear that may have Place in the Bosom of the in vain repenting Wife. 'Tis too likely that, among the Numbers of these succeeding Mistresses, he meets some agreeable and artful Creature, whom Interest, and whom perhaps Affection (for these People are not quite above its Reach) joined to Interest, engages in the Attempt of fixing herself upon him for ever. Accustomed to Deceit, the Artifices are innumerable by which these Women will pursue a Scheme like this; and the Wife ought to tremble when she makes her Husband desperate, while she sees how many of these succeed. If once this be the Consequence, all Prospect, all Hope is at an End. A Separation is the certain Consequence, either a formal or an essential one :

one: And he who would, under the proper Conduct of a Wife, have avoided a second Fault, never arrives at a second Virtue.

As Virtue never appears so much herself as when opposed to Vice, so Prudence is in no Circumstances seen so much to her Advantage, or with so large a Share of her own Lustre, as when we view her in Contrast with her opposite Rashness of Conduct. I have given you, my Dear, a Picture of what is human Life, that will be new to you, and will surprise you; but it is real. I have shewn you how much, how very much depends, in many things, upon a little: Be assured that it is thus in all Occurrences, and while you are sensible of this, be upon your Guard in the Beginning of what may be of Consequence. Nothing, my Dear, is so easy to prevent, what it will be impossible to remedy. This is what many have found too late; let it be your Happiness to know it in time, and

and let it be mine to have informed you of it. Ask the most unfortunate of Mankind from what their several Distresses have arisen, and if they will be ingenuous, they will confess, from Trifles. Press them to be free in their Acknowledgments, and they will own the great Source to have been their own Obstinacy. They would have given the World afterwards to have omitted something they have done, or to have done something which they knew right, although they did not do it, and 'tis then impossible.

All these Omissions, all these Improprieties, have been in themselves Trifles; but in their Consequences important. They have appeared little at the Time, though formidable in the highest Degree afterwards. Beware of them in time. Look not, my Dear, upon what is the thing you are about to do at this Time; but consider what will be the Event of it To-morrow, a Week, a Month, a Year hence, or for ever. You will start
at

at the Apprehension; but 'tis well you should do so. Is it not better to be terrified now, than to feel the Reality of all that you foresee hereafter. This is the Alternative, my Dear, and I know I need not tell you what you are to chuse. You are happy in your Husband, and your greatest Wish is that you may continue so. 'Tis in your own Power to do it if you please, and it will depend not upon any Condescension in the making up a Breach, but on the Prudence in avoiding one. The one is difficult, perhaps it is in general impossible; the other easy. The one must be attended with Pain; the other with the greatest Pleasure. Think, my Dearest, how glorious a Recollection it will be, at an advanced Age, to be able to say, you never had a Dispute. Think how it will embitter the sweetest Moments of a succeeding Life to recollect, that he whose Fondnesses now charm you, has been severe, averse, and rude. Avoid the Possibility of such a Recollection. The
Peace

Peace of a married Life is like the Chastity of her who has a Right to possess it, the great Value depends upon its being perfect and intire, and the Pride and Pleasure of remembring that it has never been attacked, is above all Description.

So much depends upon the Scenes I have been engaged in describing to you, that you must not, my Dear, think me tedious. These are the Dictates of Love and of Experience; they cannot deceive you either by Wilfulness or Accident. Your Fortune is in your own Hands; you depend on no one but yourself for all that you can expect in your whole Life: Be prudent in the Beginning, that you may be rich in the End.

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LET

LETTER X.

On Confidence and Secrets.

IT is impossible, my dear ***, that a Man can love the Person whom he does not esteem; at least that Love which a Wife is to expect from the Husband, cannot subsist without it. The Passion is violent at the first, and with it the generous Breast of him who possesses it entertains so high a Respect, and so implicit a Reverence for the Object of it, that this Esteem is paid without his once enquiring whether it be deserved. The Opinion which he took upon Credit while he was a Lover (for 'tis impossible, under those Circumstances, to know a Woman thoroughly) he establishes, when he is become an Husband, upon as weak a Foundation, his Affection. 'Tis well if she, who is thus honoured with his good Opinion, merit it: If she does, she is happy; but if, after the Transport and the Novelty of the first
Days

Days are over, if he find her deficient, he will despise, or at the least he will disregard her; not in Proportion to her own Want of Merit, but in Proportion to that false Opinion his Fondnesses established.

You will remember, my dearest ***, that the Merit I am here naming to you as the Foundation and Support of this Esteem with which the Husband honours his new Wife, is that of her good Qualities; the Merit of her Heart, not of her Form, for that he had before considered. The first Testimony he usually gives of his Esteem is the confiding in her, and revealing to her all his Secrets. This is done in Confidence, and the Trust ought to be inviolable; although he says nothing, he means it should be so; and he may pardon, but he never can forget, the Violation of it.

I am too sensible, my Dear, what is the Weakness of a Female Heart, not to
guard

guard you in the strongest Manner against its natural Effects on this Occasion. Use yourself to Secrecy and Reserve, accustom your Mind to it in Trifles, in Things that are of no Importance, and when you can resist the Temptations that occasionally offer of divulging these, you will have little Difficulty in Silence, when it is a Duty. You are to remember, my dearest ***, that he who reposes the Trust in you knows, that your Sex is not renowned for Secrecy. While he entrusts you, he is not without Doubts of the general, howsoever free he may be from those of the particular kind; and he will therefore be in some Degree upon the Watch against your Frailty. In confiding in you against this Opinion of the Sex in general, he gives you a Proof of that Pre-eminence, which in his Esteem he allows you over them: Remember the Credit in which you stand with him, and do not violate or forfeit it.

You

You will say it were better that the Wife were not entrusted with her Husband's Secrets, since her keeping them can be of no Good, and the least Violation of the Trust will be attended with Ill. Perhaps I agree with you, my Dear, that in Theory it may be so; but although proper, it is impracticable. Those who love truly have but one Heart between them: Their Thoughts, their Cares, their Concerns are in common. Confidence is the natural Offspring of Affection, and he who loves tenderly can keep no Secret. Men have been ruined by their Folly in this Respect; let them be profited of their Virtues: They have entrusted things, in which their Lives and Fortunes have been concerned, to those with whom they have had only a criminal Acquaintance; is it possible then that they can refrain where Virtue and where Honour authorize the Trust, and where the Person who receives the Secret is equally interested with them? In the

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one Case they have been betrayed. Keep up, my dearest ***, the Distinction between Virtue and Vice so far as in you lies: and let him who confides in you be safe; and all that he intrusts to you sacred.

You who, while you look with Terror upon the Charge, wish, or fancy that you wish, he would with-hold it, would be the first to complain, and you would have Reason if you were not entrusted; you would know that you had but a slender Hold on his Affection, who held you at a Distance from his Heart. Do not be offended that he does that, which you would be offended, and with Reason, if he omitted to do; but when you are entrusted, remember that the Esteem or the Contempt in which your Husband is to hold you for ever, depends upon your Faith and Secrecy.

It would be hard to say perhaps whether more Families have had their Peace disturbed

disturbed by the unaffectionate Reserve in the Husband, or by the idle talking of the Wife; whether more have been Sacrifices to the not entrusting of a Secret, or to the divulging of it; but this is certain, that the Offence on the one Part is less than on the other: and that the one may be with Reason pardoned and respected afterwards, but that the other cannot.

There is scarce a Family in this busy talking Town, whose most secret Affairs are not perfectly known; nay, if it be ever so improper that they should be so: And to what do you suppose this is owing? Not to the Men, for they are accustomed to Business, and find no Difficulty in being silent when it is proper. The Wife is always at the Bottom: She intrusts some bosom Friend, not remembering that the Breach of Confidence is as much made in that, as if she had revealed it to a thousand; and 'tis from this dear Friend a thousand

know it. My dearest ***, be upon your Guard in the strictest Manner against these Confidences. Remember how few Women have Secrecy in their Nature: Remember that, in doing this, you are confessing that yourself have it not, then why should you expect it in another. Remember, my Dear, that the most important of all Concerns, the Esteem and good Opinion of your Husband, depend upon your Silence, and ought to be your Guard against this Breach of Faith: And that nothing of all this is upon her whom you are entrusting; nothing more than an insignificant Promise to an indifferent Person. If you cannot keep your own Secret, why should you suppose that she will keep it for you. If all these Motives could not influence you to do it, why do you suppose she will, who has not any one of them. Remember the Improbability of her Silence, and forbear. Remember the Consequences of her disclosing what you trust her with, and tremble.

I am certain, my dearest ***, that all the Breaches of Faith, and divulging of Secrets, that have disturbed the Peace of so many Families, have been owing to this single Mistake of trusting some one Person ; and it is therefore that I caution you so strongly and so particularly against it. There is a Pleasure in whispering a Secret ; you know it ; an uncommon, tho' a childish and a dishonest Pleasure, else why did you reveal it ? Is she to whom you have revealed it less a Woman than yourself ? Has she less Temptation to the doing it ? She will have the same Pleasure in telling it to another, be assured, that you had in revealing it to her ; and she will place the same Confidence in the Person to whom she reveals it that you placed in her ; the same that he who intrusted yourself with it, placed in you. Are not these broken ; and can you doubt but that the rest will all be broken like them ?

But this, my Dear, is not all your Danger. The Secret will run swift enough through all the Female World this way, and, while all have it in trust, all will repeat it; but there is an Incident, and 'tis a very common one among Women, under which it may and it will be divulged at once to all the World, and you shall be accused of having told it. Womens Friendships with one another, my dear ***, are very frail; they are contracted without Thought, and they are broken without Provocation. A thousand little things may occur to occasion this, and the least of these will be sufficient. Women who break Friendship never become indifferent: They are violent Enemies. As they were earnest in their Friendships without enquiring whether there was Reason, they are in the same Manner outrageous in their Animosities, without knowing any Cause. This is the Fickleness and the hasty Temper of the Sex, and all of them are more or less addicted

addicted to it. You must expect it in your most intimate Acquaintances, and therefore, my Dear, let Prudence dictate to you never to put it into the Power of any of them to hurt you. Remember you may quarrel with the Person you are about to entrust: Remember this may happen without any Fault of your own, and therefore don't suppose, that though it is necessary you should, it is possible you can guard against it. Recollect with yourself what would be the Consequence of having what your Husband, out of the Abundance of his Affection and Esteem, trusted you with, spread through every Company, under the aggravating Circumstance of yourself having been the Person who disclosed it; and, while you see the Danger, avoid what you can, if you please, avoid the Occasion.

I do not imagine, my Dear, that you will be in the way of any important Inadvertence of this kind. There are Fa-

milies where there are Secrets on which
 the Welfare and the very Being of the
 Persons concerned depend ; but you are
 in no such Situation. Between People
 who have had your little Dealings or
 Connexions with the World (for your
 Husband has had very little more of this
 than yourself) whose Friends and nearest
 Relations made the Alliance, whose For-
 tunes are so affluent, and whose Cha-
 racters are so very much above the Reach
 even of Malice, there can be no Matter
 of essential and necessary Secrecy. But
 where there are not great things there are
 always little ones, and in the Deficiency
 of the others these become important.
 The Breach of Secrecy, in the most tri-
 vial of these, is not the less a Breach for
 the Unimportance of the Subject. Al-
 though he who entrusts you should not
 have Reason to set his Heart in any great
 Degree upon the Article ; yet Caprice
 may have been in the Place of Judgment,
 and he may have done so, though he
 needed not. This may be an Occasion
 of

of his taking the highest Offence. Or even if it be not thus, suppose him to regard the Matter as lightly as you do; yet he will be sorry, if he be not vexed, to find you cannot be trusted. He will with Reason determine never to confide in you when the Nature of the Occasion renders the Confidence important; and you will be unhappy if you but suspect that there is something in his Mind which he keeps from you.

You see, my Dear, on how very little things the Happiness of a married Life may depend. You will lose some Part of your Husband's Esteem, which, to a wife Woman, is the most valuable of all Treasures, by this idle Intemperance of Speech; and you will be subject to Hours, Days, Years perhaps of Uncertainty and Uneasiness, while there is, or while you do but fancy that there is, something in his Thoughts with which he does not intrust you. 'Tis possible something may occur in the Course of his Affairs which

he may wish to reveal to you ; but dares not. To a full Mind there is no Relief like the having a Bosom Friend, to whom it may in Safety unload its inmost Weight. Where is the Husband to look for this Friend, if not in his Wife ? And why will you rob him of the Advantage ? Why will you give him Occasion (for this may be the Event) to seek for that Friendship and Fidelity in some other Breast ? Why will you give yourself the Pain of this real Distress ! or supposing nothing of this possible to happen, why would you lay yourself under the Danger of imaginary Occasions of it ; and lament at once the Defect of his Esteem, and some hidden Source of Disquiet, when both perhaps are imaginary ?

All this, my Dear, depends upon the little Folly of talking of that which should be kept in Silence. Don't wonder that I have been so careful to admonish you against the thing itself, because it appears inconsiderable ; 'tis not so, you see,
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in its Effects. 'Tis on these little Points of Conduct, my Dear, that I chiefly designed to write to you ; and it is the more necessary, because you can meet with no other Instructions on this Head. The Moralists have disregarded these things, as trivial, and below their Consideration ; yet, trivial as they are, 'tis on them that all the Colour of our Lives depends. They will advise you seriously, wisely, and gravely concerning Vices, and their Effects ; but this to you is needless. You have none : Nay, you have not the very Seeds or Principles of them in your Temper ; but, my Dear, these little Inadvertences, to which alone you are exposed, and concerning which they have written nothing ; these are the Rocks on which the Number of the Married split. I have that Confidence in the natural Chastity and common Virtue of my Sex to believe, that an hundred are unhappy for one that is vicious : But sure our Happiness, my Dear, is worth our Care, and this is the way to guard it. * * *

L E T T E R XI.

Of natural Imperfections.

I Have led you by the Hand, my dearest Niece, through several of the difficult and several of the dangerous Stages in the Beginning of a married Life. I have been attentive to the Decorum as well as to the Duties you owe to your Husband; nor is there the most delicate Subject which I shall leave untouched. These are the Occasions on which you will be left uninformed by those who have written; and it will be dangerous to mistake, and very difficult to determine, without Mistake, to whom you may apply in Conversation. I need not tell you that I am always at your Service, and that you will make me happy in employing me. I shall take it as a Mark of your Prudence that you do not leave yourself solely to your own Opinion; and my Happiness is indeed so much dependant on yours, that you need not doubt my utmost Assurances.

I have sometimes thought this a sufficient Reason why I might have saved myself and you the Trouble of these Letters; but it is not so. Mine is not a Time of Life at which I can expect to see many more Years. These Letters will be a Legacy worth more to you than all I can give you beside, and by this Means you may have my Advice compleat. This was one Reason that induced me to write them; but this was not the only one. We deliver our Thoughts without Interruption upon Paper, and 'tis easier to put them into Method.

Among these and other Considerations which might be named, you will, as I have done, find many that alone might serve for Apologies both to myself and you for the Trouble; but I have fallen upon another, which I had not before remembered, and which alone were enough. My last has been upon the Subject of Secrecy: I have most earnestly requested

quested of you to preserve this inviolable. How then can you at once ask and follow my Advice? The very applying to me is breaking that Secrecy which I have recommended to you to be held so sacred. This must appear from the Course of that Letter; but the Subject of this will be more evidently a Proof of it. I had Reason when I began; I have double Reason to proceed. My dearest ***, lay by my Letters with as much Care as I have written them: Instead of consulting me, have recourse to them, whenever you want Advice. There may be Subjects on which you would be ashamed; there may be Subjects on which you ought to be afraid to speak to me: Consult these in my Place, and it shall be my Care, as I esteem it my Duty, upon this Consideration, to make them as compleat as my Abilities will let me.

I have told you, my Dear, there may be Occasions on which it would not be
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proper nor right for you to apply even to me. I have mentioned Secrets, with which it would be criminal to entrust even your nearest Friends : I am about to name the most tender and the most important of them all.

You will remember, my dearest ***, that, as mortal Creatures, we are all liable to Imperfections. It was not intended that we should be perfect, nor are any of us so. Some have more, and some have less, of these Deficiencies which we inherit from our Nature ; but none is wholly without them. You must have considered your Husband as no better than a human Creature, although you have Reason to esteem him one of the most compleat and amiable among them. If you married him under this Consideration, you must marry him with the Expectation that there must be some Defect, or some Imperfection about him. The Eyes of Affection may not be open to this, be it what it will ; but it would be
 strange

strange indeed if it should not be something. That Affection may be so powerful in you, that it may disguise this Defect, whatsoever it is, although great; or it may be, whatsoever it is, so little, as not to be worthy of Regard: Still I tell you, however, you will find something. Do not be surpris'd that you know it not long since; for who exposes purposely his Weaknesses? Men are careful to hide all their Faults, but especially those of Nature, and they are right to do so, since they are not things in which themselves are guilty, or which their Application can amend. That you discovered this not before, be it what it will, is no Shame to you; if you have not yet discovered it, 'tis to your Honour. Your Fondness has shut your Eyes to the Sight of it; but as the Fondness of the Bride does not last for ever, although a better Passion supplies its Place in the fixed and rational Love of the Wife, you, if you have not already discovered, will most assuredly discover something of this

This kind. This is a Secret, my Dearest, with which your Husband entrusts you, whether he chuses it or not. This is a Confidence which you possess as a Wife; this is of all Secrets the most important; and all the Duties of the Wife join in declaring that it must be inviolable. It may be imprudent to betray the others; but to give Breath to the least Hint concerning this is criminal: 'tis what deserves Punishment, and what will have it. 'Tis a Secret which, when disclosed but to one Person beside yourself, never can be kept. 'Tis a Secret which your Husband will be conscious none could divulge beside yourself; and as he will at once remember the Obligations under which Nature, Love, Gratitude, and Reason laid you to have kept it; and recollect the unjust Disgrace that will be reflected upon him from your divulging it. He will have both Resentment in the highest Degree, and Reason also, in some Degree never to forgive you. All the Contempt which the World will bestow

flow upon him on this Occasion, he will return upon you; and he will have Justice, for his is a Fault of Nature, in which his own Mind has no Share; yours is your own, and voluntary.

When I tell you, my Dear, that it is natural to suppose, as no Man can be perfect, that he who has made you happy by his Choice, must or may have some Defect, some Infirmary, or some Imperfection; I am as far from guessing what that may be, as I am from knowing that it is so. Some have a thousand, some but one Fault from her: In some the single Imperfection is equal to a thousand, in others it is inconsiderable. Whatever it be, if you have not discovered it, seek not after it. Although it is not in Nature to be so; yet you may believe, and it will be Virtue in you to believe, that he is perfect; at least take your Discovery of it, when that shall happen, upon your own Opinion, and not on that of any other. 'Tis Virtue to be insensible of the
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Imperfections of a Friend, much more of a Husband ; and it accuses her, who is too inquisitive to distinguish, and too nice in the Regret with which she endures them, of having in her Thoughts, if not within her Knowledge, others in whom they may be, or she fancies they may be, wanting.

I remember to have heard of a *Roman* Lady, who, when she was blamed by her Husband for not having told him that there was something disagreeable in his Breath, replied with that honourable Ignorance which became a virtuous Wife, that she had supposed all Men were equally subject to this Defect. Oppose to this, my Dear, the Conduct of your unhappy Friend, you know who 'tis I mean, a Suspicion, which, if innocent, she could not have conceived was the Beginning of all her Misfortunes, and it was a Beginning worthy of all that followed.

Let

Let not the Discourse of others lead you to form Ideas, and to judge from those Ideas of that in which they may deceive you; in which 'tis almost certain that they will deceive you. Be upon your Guard even against your own Senses, that they do not mislead you on so important and so dangerous a Subject; much more against the Discourse of others, who perhaps mean nothing but to mislead you. Be like the *Roman* Matron in her Ignorance; and if you find in any thing your Husband less agreeable than your uninformed Fancy made you suppose you should, imagine that all Men are so. You have no way to know, nor have you any Right to guess, that it is otherwise.

It is not only that your Husband may with right be offended at you for disclosing Imperfections, of which he is conscious, and which, if it were in his Power, he would remedy; but which, as it is
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not, your Fault is the greater in revealing, as he has none in the bearing them. There is a hidden Danger to which you are exposed in it, and by which you may suffer in some Degree unjustly ; yet you will not deserve any Pity on that Head. You may betray to others Defects and Imperfections in him, of which he is not conscious in himself. Custom and Familiarity will disguise many things to the Person unto whom they belong ; and even Self-love, if they are very disagreeable ones, will sometimes blind him to the Knowledge of them. What either of these things would effect alone, both together will assuredly do with more Force. They will, in many of the lesser Defects of Person, or of Constitution, conceal them from the Person who is subject to them perfectly. In this Case, my dearest *** , there is a double Danger, and no Caution can be too great against it. This may be in all Respects the Case, my Dear, and therefore all this Caution is required in every Case : All this Abhorrence

rence of revealing what it can do you no Good to tell ; but which it will be most disagreeable to him to have told. You may, in revealing such a little Secret, not only call down his Repentment for your Want of friendly Secrecy ; but you may appear to him in the yet more offensive and unpardonable Light of an Inventor, as well as Propagator of his Scandal ; as a malicious Person, who, out of your own unjust Distaste to him, would endeavour, by false Accounts, to render him distasteful to the World.

Think, my Dear, think with Horror on this Consequence : What can be more terrible than for a Wife to have forfeited thus perfectly all Title to her Husband's Confidence, Esteem, and Friendship ; and to have done all this, by what ? By Folly. For what End ? For none. It will aggravate the Consideration, that she is conscious of her Innocence in the one Part of the Charge, as clearly as she

is of her Fault in the other. But how to make that Innocence appear? Shall she explain herself to her injured Husband? There is no Word that can be named in the Transaction but will inflame the Dispute. But suppose she persist, and think of bearing this in the way to doing herself Justice, how is she to obtain it? Her Husband is her Judge, and he is possessed in favour of himself. It may be a long Custom has deadened his own Senses to that in himself which is so disagreeable to her: It may be an Infirmary, which, in its own Nature, is not to be distinguished by the Person. There are many such, and that in particular which was the Misfortune of the *Roman* Husband is of that kind. Can she persuade him of that which he has no Conviction of in himself, and which concerns no other Person? Impossible. The Event is easy; Obstinacy, and a Love of Contention, are added to the former Charge of her Want of Secrecy, and her Ill-will in the inventing the thing charged upon

upon him: And under such an Accumulation of Suspicions, some Part of which at least 'tis evident must be true, 'tis no Wonder that they become irrecoverable.

But, my dearest ***, here is another Thought most naturally started, which may at once alarm you, and make you be very tender in your Distastes on these Accounts. You find we may be liable to Imperfections which ourselves are not acquainted with: I think no Woman can be so far from the Appearance of but the least of them as you; and yet 'tis not impossible but, although unknown to me, something of this kind may be too plain to your Husband; nay, though it be unknown to yourself. Since there is but a Possibility that this may be the Case, my Dearest, can you be too tender in those Censures which, be it but in your own Mind, you fling upon your Husband: How know you but while you are thus inquisitive to find some natural Defect
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in him, he may be as industriously labouring to disguise to himself some Imperfection of yours. Think, my Dear, how amiable a Light he will appear in, and in how hateful a one you would, could you be guilty of such a Folly, in this Circumstance. Do not suppose that the one may not happen as well as the other: Nay, do not flatter yourself that the one is at all less likely to happen than the other. You are, like him, an human Creature, and I have told you we are all liable to these Defects. You may not be sensible of it, although he is; for I have also told you, and it is a most certain Truth, that many of these things, though sensible in the most disagreeable Manner to others, are quite hid from ourselves. I do not suppose you, my Dear, subject to any Imperfection of this kind; much less can I think you capable of a Fault like the other. Pray understand me as I mean, as only laying down to you, who are a Wife, all that may regard the Conduct of a Wife. Suppose

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some other ; for it is impossible that you should place yourself, as much as it is that I should place you, in this Situation ; but imagine some other Person in it. The Wife, and the beloved Wife (for that must be the Circumstance of a virtuous and a worthy Man) enjoying all that can be called real Satisfaction in this Life, and with a Prospect of all this continuing so long as her Life continues. Fancy her beloved in the tenderest Manner by her Husband, who, perhaps ignorantly to himself, is subject to some Defect of this kind, and fancy her revealing it to some Intimate, that Intimate to her Acquaintance, and they to all the World : Suppose the Husband meeting every where with the Insult of this Reproach, as coming from his Wife ; and, at the same time suppose that he thinks it feigned and pretended on her Part, remembering on his own that he is not only concealing from the World some real Imperfection of hers, but labouring to shut his Senses against it. Her real Infidelity

will be aggravated by the supposed Malice and Falshood of the Aspersion, and both by his own Goodness and Generosity. The Consequence is easily seen; he must despise and hate her. The present Peace of her Life is destroyed, and all Prospect of future Happiness is sacrificed, and she is either to be separated from him for ever, or pass a Life with him more intolerable, though less dishonourable, than the Separation.

I have drawn you the full Length, my Dear, of a most disgustful Picture; but you will understand it rightly. 'Tis fit you should be acquainted with the worst Consequences that can attend the Faults in a married Behaviour, that, seeing to what little things even these in their greatest Extent may be owing, you may be, as you ought, upon your Guard against even the least of them. Adieu, my Dear; I am as weary as you can be of so disagreeable a Theme: Let us forget

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get it; but let us never forget what may be its Occasions.

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L E T T E R XII*.

On the Government of the Thoughts.

I Have taken up a great deal of your Time, my dearest ***, in cautioning you against the common Mistake of young Wives of making Confidants; and against entrusting these with what ought to be the most inviolable of all Secrets, the Defects or Imperfections, if there should be any such, of your Husband. This, to the Generality of Wives, would be all that the most tender Friend could think it necessary to mention; all that such would need, or would be capable of guarding against; but, my Dear, when I consider that it is to you I write, I know I may say more. I have told you that it is imprudent and ungrateful to mention, even to your greatest Favourite, the least Defect

Defect or Imperfection, or any thing that may seem but disagreeable to you in the Person of your Husband: This, my Dear is your Duty; but more is required of you by Reason, as I have on several Occasions said to you already, than is commanded by Duty. There are ways of doing that which it is proper to do, and of letting alone that which is improper, which have in themselves as much Merit as the very Act itself. It is concerning these that I have principally written to you: There are these delicate and tender Points in every Part of a married Life, and under every Circumstance of it, on which not only the very greatest Happiness depends; but they even dictate the Manner as well as Necessity of the others.

A Consideration of these has been the very Occasion and Purpose of these Letters which I have written to you. They are, and the rest of them will be like the former, rather on the Decorum, than

immediately on the Duties of a married Life; and, as I have told you just now, the latter of these depends upon the former. Many grave Authors have written of the one; but none of them have touched upon the other. It is therefore that these Books appear uncouth and harsh, forbidding and disagreeable. As Men of Sense and of Religion they have been enabled to prescribe the Rules; but they have no Knowledge of the Manner in which they are to be obeyed. They have not been married; they are not Women; and believe me, my Dear, there is nothing beside Experience that can give Lessons upon so nice a Point. Those who remember in what themselves have succeeded, and in what they have failed; what has been the Occasion of Happiness to them, and what had like to have been an Occasion of Misery, can, by the Admonitions of that Remembrance, advise others how to obtain, and how to avoid, what they ought to hope, and what they ought to fear.

Think

Think yourself happy, my dearest
 ***, that you have the Advantage of
 such an Experience; think nothing tedious or trifling that you meet with in these Letters: Those who despise Trifles find themselves destroyed by them. Be attentive to the Virtues and the Duties of that Condition into which you have thrown yourself with very little Knowledge of it; you know their Concern; but be as careful of the Manner in which you do them; for, without that, what is good may be ungraceful, and you may be unhappy, although you are virtuous.

I have told you that Faults in a Wife generally grow upon very slight Foundations, the worst of them proceed from things in themselves trifling; but their Increase is certain. The Acorn is small when it is planted in the Earth; but he must be very ignorant indeed who affects to wonder at the large Tree that grows from it. My Dear, watch the

first Motions of your Heart in secret: Correct them if they are amiss; encourage and continue them if they are good; for upon these all depend. They are the first Shoots of every Flower that can adorn the Garden of Marriage, and of every Weed that can deform it. They may be rooted up with Ease when young, or they may be cherished with a little Trouble, and all the future Prospect will depend upon them.

I have cautioned you against revealing any thing concerning the Imperfections of your Husband: Let me now tell you that, if you are good and wise in the Degree that I expect to see you, and that I am persuaded I shall see you, you will take Pains to conceal them not only from others, but even from yourself. I have told you what may serve as an Example: I have set before you the Conduct of a Husband, perhaps your own; for I tell you that, without your knowing it, he may be concealing, so far as it is possible,

sible, even from himself, something that is disagreeable in you; and I have designed it as a Model for your own. Although it will be acting up to your Duty, my Dear, if you conceal from the World and keep within your own Breast such Failings or Defects as you, and only you, may have Opportunities of discovering; yet a good Wife, nay, a wise one, if there were no more than that in it, will do more than her Duty: She will not content herself that her Conduct is unblamable, she will endeavour to make it meritorious, and will lay a Claim to the Gratitude as well as the Acknowledgements of the Husband's Heart, and to the Applause as well as the Approbation of her own.

You would do all this, my Dear; I know you would; and, to pursue the Plan of my former Letter, let me inform you how this may be done, even under the least advantageous Circumstances. We will suppose your Husband has some

natural Infirmary or Failing in his Person, or in his Constitution, which, according to the Admonition I have given you already, you would be very certain to keep from the Knowledge of all the World. There is yet a farther Step in your Power; you may keep it almost from your own. These things are in their own Nature but of little Consequence; the Importance which they have they receive from the Manner in which we treat them. 'Tis in your Power, by employing your Thoughts for ever upon this Defect, be it whatsoever, to make it of the greatest Consequence: 'Tis in your Power also, by denying it that regard, to reduce it almost to nothing. I am sure I need not tell you, my Dear, which of these is to be preferred. The Respect with which you treat your Husband will be returned to yourself; and all the Merit to which you can arrive upon this Head is its own Reward: Let this encourage you.

It is of great Importance to your Husband's Peace to appear well to the World; it is of yet greater to appear well to you: Let him not, while you have the Virtue to assure unto him the former, want the latter from your Want of Affection.

Many Persons have never discovered the most conspicuous Imperfections in their dearest and most intimate Friends, till some foolish and officious Person has named them; or if they had seen them at the Beginning of an Acquaintance, Length of Time, and Opportunity of observing things much more worthy of Regard in the Person, have got the better of the unfavourable Impression; and, till this ill-timed Mention of them, they have never been observed, although perhaps afterwards never forgotten. The ill Office which these busy People do to one another do not you, my Dear, do to

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yourself. Guard your Mind against such Thoughts, and the Object of them will be forgotten.

Shall I speak to you from Experience of the most near kind. You remember your Uncle had a Defect in one of his Legs; it had been broke when he was an Infant, and ill set. When he first visited me I never could keep my Eye from the Imperfection: Not Good-nature, no nor good Manners, could influence me to do what I ought; but believe me, my Dearest, when I was enough acquainted with him to see the Uprightness of his Heart and Goodness of his Disposition, I never saw the Shape of this Limb afterwards. I was young, my Dear, as you are, and I remember I was in danger from an Incident which I cannot remember without despising it most perfectly. Some officious Friend, after I had many Years forgotten it, said, she had often thought what Pity it was there
was

was such a Blemish about a very agreeable Man. My Dear, I had more Pain to get over this second Difficulty than the first. My Eye was again involuntarily cast towards it, and I do assure you the Peace of my Life was never so endangered as by this Accident.

This can be no exact Parallel, to any thing that concerns you in this, but what a busy Friend did for me, or shall I say a busy Enemy did against me in this Case, your own Thoughts may do, with regard to you, on some like Occasion. I am assured that your Husband has no Imperfection, Blemish, or Defect about him, which can come within the Knowledge of any one except yourself: I do believe that he has none which can be known even to yourself; but I am giving general, and do not let them appear particular, Cautions. Although he had no such Defect at the time when you married, 'tis possible that
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it may happen afterwards. Sicknefs, or the very Courfe of Time, or of a thoufand Accidents, may occafion it; and, being the Effect of thefe, and therefore the Fault of Nature, not his own, you can have no Right to be difpleafed with him for it. The fame Accidents may alfo happen to you; therefore, remembering what you would expect on that Occafion, do the fame.

I have been all this time endeavouring, upon the Principles of Love, of Virtue, of Reafon, and of Self-intereft, to eftablifh in you a Refolution of feeing as little as poffible any thing, if there be any thing in your Husband which he wifhes hid, or which, if he knew it, he would wifh hid. Be convinced, my Dear, and follow the Advice ftrictly and cautiously. Whatever there may be, that is, not to fay difagreeable (for there can be nothing) whatever there can be leaft agreeable, about his Perfon, think
leaft

least of it. It is your Duty and your Interest to respect him, and you will find your Account in it. Shall I advise you freely? Consider whether there be any thing in your own Figure that is less pleasing than the rest of it : I own, my Dear, your Enemies would not be able to find this ; but yet yourself perhaps, on the most important Occasion on which I advise you to make the Enquiry, may. Consult your Glass, consult yourself freely and impartially ; if there be any thing with which you can but remember that you was once displeased, till the Applause of others buried the Thought of it ; recall this to your Memory, and doubt not but your Husband has Eyes to it, although he purposely and good-naturedly shut them. Let this be your Resource, and make his Conduct your Example. Whenever the mischievous Recollection of something, be it ever so little disagreeable, or be it but imaginarily disagreeable, in him, would
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force itself upon your Thoughts, turn them to this little Blemish of your own. It will answer a thousand Purposes: It will inspire Humility and Gratitude: It will tell you that you have no Right to that Opinion by which he represents you as perfect in his own Consideration, and consequently that it is an Act of Merit in him to do so. This Recollection will, on these Principles, my Dearest, serve you on a double Account: Instead of your dwelling upon the Remembrance of what, though in itself a Trifle, might yet tend to render him disagreeable to you, on your Affection for whom your Peace and Happiness depends; it will at once teach you to look with some Degree of Humility on yourself, and with a new Respect on him: While it shews you in the same Light your own Defects and his Perfections, it will be an Occasion of your being moderate in your Opinion of your own Merit, and warm in your Love to him.

These,

These, my dearest ***, are Considerations that will appear new to you, and the Advice may possibly seem harsh; but you will reconcile yourself to it. I own that Vanity is a prevailing and a pleasing Passion with us; and that it is too frequently the principal one in the Female Heart; but 'tis a Source of Mischief, and does not obtain us that Respect which it demands of others, but their Contempt. 'Tis not to be encouraged: You will have Reason enough, my Dear, to find it is not: And this will be one of the most happy Methods on which it is possible for you to fall for the subduing it. When you think not so well of yourself as the World thinks of you, you ensure that good Opinion: When they discover that you think better, they withdraw it in Proportion. I mention this, my Dear, as an accidental Advantage that will attend this studied and becoming Consciousness of any Defect
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in yourself; but the great Circumstance is that on which I founded the Observation. As your good Qualities are more the Concern of your Husband than they are of the World, his Eyes will be more open than those of the World to them. And this will be your greatest and most essential Happiness. You will, by this Conduct, while you are reducing your Sense of your own Merit into Bounds that all People will call moderate, be raising your Ideas of your Husband's Perfections. He will double his Sense of all those good Qualities in you, which you seem not to prize highly enough yourself: and he will love you for acknowledging Merit in him as much as if yourself possessed it.

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L E T T E R XII.

*Of Consent of Thought in the Affairs of
Life.*

I Congratulate with myself, as well as you, my dearest ***, that I have gone thro' the most unpleasing Part of my Advice to you. Whatever is disagreeable to you in the Reading, be assured, my Dear, has been more so to me in the Writing. But Medicines, altho' they are distasteful to the Palate, are often necessary; and the Wise, will swallow them, by way of Prevention in Times of Danger. I am assured, that all I have been writing in my two last Letters, is what concerns not you nor your Husband at this Time. I never supposed, or imagined, that it did; but I have told you that it may: And I am happy that I have not left you unprovided against the most dangerous Attack that can be made upon the Marriage Happiness; or unprepared to meet it be it ever so sudden; or what is

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much more dangerous, be it ever so subtle or so hidden an Attack. But we have done with it: And from the Consideration of what may be necessary, let us pass to the Remainder of what is.

My Dear, beware of that common Error, that the Wife has no Business with her Husband's Affairs. It has ruin'd the Peace of many, and the Prosperity of more Families. There can be no Concern of Importance that is his, which is not equally yours. You have Understanding that may be useful to him in the Management of the most difficult and nice Events, and he will wish to have a Friend with whom he can advise, and to whom he can unburthen his Heart, and communicate his Sentiments on such Occasions. Who is so proper as you? Take Care that he may see, none is so worthy of the Confidence.

But in the avoiding one Fault, my dearest ***, be careful that you don't
run

run into another : It's common for the Dread of one Extream to drive People of weak Minds upon the Opposite ; but this is not your Danger. There is not any Part of the Conduct of a Wife so essential as this : I am sorry to say there is not any so difficult ; but you have the Clue of Discretion which will lead you through all the Windings of the Labyrinth. Remember, my Dear, that a middle Conduct, between the Extremes of one Part and the other, is generally the right : It is in nothing so essential as in this : The Point at which you are to aim is the middle State between Neglect and Impertinence : The one is not more mischievous than the other is troublesome.

Remember as an universal Rule, and have Recourse to it to try your Conduct upon all Occasions, that your Interest and your Duty are to have a general Knowledge of the Affairs of your Husband ; but not a particular one : The first is useful, the other is idle and un-

neceffary. It would very ill become the Wife who did but affect the Character of a good one, not to know whether ſhe had one thouſand Pounds a Year or five to live upon; but it would be a Blemish in the Character of the beſt, to be inquisitive what Money her Huſband ſpent in his common Occaſions; or at what Time every particular Tenant paid him.

I do not know a better Rule, after the firſt, than that you are always ready to be informed of whatſoever your Huſband thinks it proper to communicate to you; and that you never expreſs the leaſt Deſire of knowing more. His Love to you will not ſuffer him to conceal any thing of Moment from you, the knowing which can be of either the leaſt Good or the leaſt Pleaſure to you. If he keep from your Knowledge that which gives him Pain, and would give it you alſo unneceſſarily, it is more than Impertinence; it is Ingratitude to teize him to reveal it. His Love for you, as it will influence him to communicate all his real

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Concerns, so it will also plead with him to be careful of them. He who is happy with you will be careful that he continue so ; and he will know that in explaining to you what are the real Circumstances of his Affairs, he, at once, gives you a rational Assurance of the Continuance of that Happiness, and arms you against any little Temptation you might have to break in upon it.

I don't know whether it have been owing to a Backwardness in the Husband to explain his Circumstances, or to a Negligence in the Wife of attending to that Explanation ; but wherever the Fault has lain, I have been Witness to the Effect in many Families, the Ruin of those who would otherwise have continued in Prosperity : And of this you may be assured, my Dear, that with the Destruction of the Fortune in this Case, there always happens that of the Harmony, which alone could give them the Means of enjoying it.

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Let me be very plain with you, for the Importance of the Occasion requires and will justify it. I have seen among our own Relations, those whom no other Incident could have hurt, made miserable by this want of mutual Knowledge and mutual Confidence. You will know whom I mean, my Dear, without my explaining myself farther. I don't know whether the Husband omitted to tell, or the Wife neglected to regard the Situation of their Affairs; but this you see, they lived at ten times their Income, and they are ruined. I am afraid the Fault was too much her's, and therefore 'tis I produce the Instance by way of cautioning you against it. This is the more deplorable, my Dear, in that it happens the most naturally where the People love one another most; the Wife is giddy and runs into Expences suited to her Inclination, not to her Circumstances; the Husband is sensible of it, but he loves her too well to tell her she is wrong: He can consent to the Distress which he
feels

fees in Prospect, rather than intrude upon the immediate Pleasures of the Woman whom he loves. What an Affliction must this be to her Breast afterward, To consider that she has involved not only herself, but the Man who doats on her in Difficulties, and this because he doated on her.

You have been happy, my Dear, in marrying a Man of such a Fortune that it is not easy to be hurt : But as with Misers the Desire of Money encreases with the Sum of it, so with People of Pleasure, and you are too young not to have a Taste for that, the Love of Expence encreases with the Means of it. Altho' it is not easy to suppose your Fortune cou'd be hurt even by Excesses, yet there is no Fortune but may be ruined ; and there are Excesses against which no Circumstances can stand it long. I tell you in good Time, my Dear, what may, not what is likely to happen : But be guarded against it as much as if it were probable. It wou'd

be terrible to find Occasion of denying yourself many Things to which you had a natural Right, because you had been idle enough to indulge in those to which you had not; and it will be the more hard to be without these, because you had enjoy'd those which were greater. Can there be a more aggravating Circumstance? Yes, more than one, and you shall hear them, because I know it is the only Way by which you can be informed of them, and they will guard you against the very first and slightest Steps, towards what in others might end in compleat Ruin. Wou'd it not be a terrible Consideration, in the Midst of the Want of Things, which are in themselves useful, to recollect that it is owing to the Indulgence in some other Article, which while you enjoy'd it in the fullest Profusion, was not only useless but incapable of giving you Pleasure: And to sum up the Account with that which must, more than all other Considerations, wound a tender and a generous Heart, Whatever Affliction

tion and Remorse must attend the having involved in the Distress a worthy and an indulgent Husband ; who only fell into it because he was too tender of your Peace, to check or stop you in the idlest of your Extravagances.

What must be the Affliction of that Woman ; do not imagine, my Dearest, that I level every Consideration at your immediate Circumstances ; that which I am about to name can never become yours : But it is better to admonish you by parallel Instances, than to shock you with what are direct, and may be unnecessary : What I say, my Dear, must be the Distress of that Woman who, after Ten or a Dozen Years Marriage, finds it impossible to support a Pair of Horses to her Coach, because in the first Half Dozen Years she would not be drawn by less than six : What of that fallen Grandeur, which because at first it wou'd eat only on Plate, cannot at last afford to sup on China.

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But to return from Generals, to what will interest and concern you in Particular: My Dear be cautious, but that is not all the Charge I have to give you; be circumspect not only over your Actions and your Inclinations, but over the first and the least Tendencies of your Thoughts toward Extravagance. 'Tis on the Regulation of these that all depends: I have told you, and I repeat it, that 'tis these which are the real Spring of the greatest Things that can concern you, and therefore it is that I have been so careful in directing all my Advice and Admonition towards these. Do not imagine from what I am saying, that I have any Design to set you against the innocent and proper Enjoyments of Life, nay not against its Indulgences. There are a vast many Things People of your Fortune may allow themselves without being extravagant: Nay 'tis hardly easy to say, in general, setting aside Play, what cou'd deserve the Name, but still, my Dear, be careful. Altho' nothing that you can immediately fall upon

upon can well deserve the Name of Excess; yet Things which you can at the Extent of Prudence and Economy afford may, nay, and they will naturally lead you to those which you cannot. Here is the Danger: — And you must guard against its first Approaches.

Be careful, my Dear, how you enter on any new Article of Expence upon your own Opinion: Nor despise the Consideration because trifling in itself: 'Twill be the Road to what is important. I wou'd have you start at the least Innovation in your Expence or Family. Two additional Servants lead the Way to Twenty: The hiring a Country-Seat in a more convenient Situation, will lead to the building one. Whatsoever is done of this kind, let it be your Husband's Act, not yours. Nor think it any Authority or Excuse for you, that if it be your Proposal he make no Objections. His Affection to you may prevent his speaking, even where his Reason would encline him to it: And what can be so

ungrateful as to take such Advantage of such a Passion.

But this is not all, you are not only to have an Eye upon your own Conduct in this important Article, but on his. I need not tell you, my Dear, with how much Caution such a Piece of Advice is to be obey'd : But yet it is to be obey'd. You cannot be too severe in your Examination of your own Conduct on this Head ; and you cannot be too reserved and delicate in that of your Husband. I have told you that his Affection for you may prevent him from pointing out to you, even in the gentlest Manner, Errors in your Conduct : The same Affection may blind him also to Errors in his own, when they are such as lead to Things that will give you greater Pleasure. In this Case, surely, the Affection, which ought on your Part to be in equal Measure with his own, will direct you to see for him ; and altho' your own Interest or your own Indulgence is concerned, it will influence
you

you to speak against them. There cannot be in any Thing so much Premeditation necessary as in the speaking on such an Occasion : Yet of all other Opportunities, the Occasion you will have of doing it on these Terms will be the most favourable, and will take off the most of that Restraint. I need not tell you that the Language of a Wife on such a Subject, is to be that of Apology, and Fear of Disobliging, and of a Consciousness that it is easy for her to be mistaken : But with all this there may be Room for Reason. And when her Husband sees that her Love is the Source of her Care, and discovers that Care to be employ'd against herself, not in Favour of any Thing that might give her Pleasure, he will not only listen, and be indulgent to the Presumption of the Advice, tho' it ought not to wear the full Force of Advice neither : He will love the Person who sees his Interest and her own to be the same ; and who, in that Consideration, cannot only decline, but fear the Appearance

ance of what seems to give her but the Preference.

Here, my Dear, is an Article, under which there appears a Method of making that which is the most offensive, and the most dangerous of all the Duties of a Wife, pleasing and meritorious. 'Tis so in many other Particulars when they are rightly studied. The prudent Wife will not only avoid the common Occasions of Offence, but she will make those Things her Advantage, which to another are most fatal. You will perhaps see some Occasion in which not your own Concerns but his are leading to Extravagance : You will see that not his Indulgence to you, but his Propensity to Racing, or to any other of the fashionable Follies of the Great, is the Object of your Danger : This is a much more difficult Task for you than the former ; but the Duty encreases with the Difficulty ; and the more Danger may attend the Attempt, the more Caution

Caution is necessary in the making it;
but there is no Plea for declining it.

You will know that it is only very tenderly such a Thing can be mentioned to him: You will know, my Dear, that to provoke him, is to render him resolute and obstinate: Chuse a proper Moment: Be not rash in the Resolution, much less in the executing it. Wait to deliberate, and be first sure that it is necessary you should speak; then be careful that you speak in a proper Time, and that you do it with proper Respect and Caution. Hint your Meaning first in remote Terms. Speak of others who have fallen into the Folly, without seeming to think him in any Danger of it. If he receive this with Temper, you are sure to succeed, persist; but let not the Prospect of Success make you rash: Nor suffer his Willingness to listen to you, when you speak as you ought, to encourage you to expect the same favourable Attention to Things that you ought not to say. Remember that it
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has been to the remote Manner in which you nam'd this Matter that you owe the happy Consequences of your having nam'd it, and to continue them pursue the same Plan. Never let it seem to have entered into your Imagination that he was in Danger, but urge from Time to Time new Instances of the Weakness of engaging in such Attempts, and of the Ruin that has attended the doing so, he will be won perfectly: He will not only pay the more Attention to your Reasons, for the distant Manner of your urging them, but he will, on the Principle I have been inculcating, throughout the preceding Letter to you, my Dear, love you for the Virtue of trying, even while you were uneasy at his Weaknesses, to shut your Eyes upon them; and even to be ignorant of them while you advis'd against them.

A Conquest of this Kind, my Dear, will give you more solid, and more rational Pleasure, than all the Beauties of the World ever felt from the imaginary Victories.

Victories of their Eyes; and you will have a Right to pride yourself upon it. 'Tis not this Circumstance alone, the cautious Behaviour I have named will be of Use to you. What is in this Manner delivered as particular, will serve as general Admonition; and tho' you never should have this exact Occasion to employ it, yet keep it in your Mind for others. Truth, my Dear, is Truth for ever, and on all Occasions; and that Behaviour which is right in one Circumstance, will shew you what is also proper in another.

I have told you, my Dearest ***, how you are to continue your Behaviour if the first Step succeed; and 'tis ten thousand to one that it will do so. There yet remains, however, to consider what wou'd be your proper Conduct if it should fail: This is a more difficult Part in the Execution, but not in the Determination: Fewer Words will deliver it; and tho' it be not easy, you must remember, my Dear, that it

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is necessary you shou'd practise it. If on the first remote Hint he become displeased : If he hear you unwillingly ; if he try to shift the Subject ; or if he be absolutely peevish, give it up entirely. I do not say, my Dear, that you are to give it up for ever, but entirely for that Time. Be assured he is either devoted to the Mischief past all reclaiming ; tho' that wou'd be the last Thing to suspect, or else he is involved so deeply in the present Scheme, that 'tis impossible for him to get back if he ever so much wish it. This is much more likely to be the Case, and I need not say how much it is the happier : In this Situation you will have nothing to do but to wait with Patience for the Event, and to pray that it may be unfortunate to him in the immediate Chance.

Few who sit down to play, or who engage themselves in any Species of Gaming, know what is the Consequence of the first Decision : To win is often to be undone : To lose is the single Means
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of their Security. Be not uneasy at the Sum that depends on the first Bett: Enquire not after it; and if you come by Accident to the Knowledge, let it not give you Concern that it is considerable. In your Hope that he will lose, the larger it is the better, because it will the more deter him from repeating the Hazard. Men are all backward in this dangerous Folly at the first; 'tis only Custom that familiarizes them; and he who is throughly chagrined at the first Loss, will not continue it into a Custom.

Altho' I wou'd have you of all Things avoid meddling in your Husband's private Affairs, or enquiring into those little Things which he may wish to have remain a Secret: Yet this is far from a trivial Concern, and it will justify your Curiosity. I mean, my Dear, that it will justify it to yourself, for nothing can do so to him. Therefore altho' it is necessary to enquire, 'tis as necessary and as important to you to do this in such a Manner that he may not discover
you

you are enquiring. It will not be difficult for you to know the particular Subject on which he is interested: And it will be less difficult to know when and how that will be decided.

I have caution'd you, my dearest ***, and no Caution can be too strict upon so material a Point, to be silent in your Remonstrances, let them have been ever so remote, as soon as you have found that he is averse to hear them: But when you have watch'd this time, you may and you must speak again. I do not tell you there can be too much Tenderness in the Manner, or too many Considerations as to the bringing this about, but still it must be done. I shall not blame you for trembling at the Thought of speaking to him upon a Subject, on which he has already shewn himself so apt to take Offence: But still it must be spoken of. Remember for your Comfort in the Task, that the Circumstances are now alter'd; and there are many Things that may be said and may
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be done too, without Offence, under particular Opportunities, that can by no Means be attempted prudently at others.

I have told you that supposing him averse to hear you at the first: 'Tis probable it was because he was engag'd too firmly to go back, and in that Situation even Things which he knew to be right would only teize him. 'Tis now otherwise, the Decision is made, and he is perfectly free from those Engagements. But the Crisis is yet more important: Happy it is for you that he will hear you with more Temper. He is now at the Point of Time in which he will either devote himself for Life, to the most destructive of all Pursuits, or he will forsake it altogether. Your Business is plain, and you will have your Lesson into what Form you are to throw your Arguments. You will know whether he has lost or won. If he have won, your Point is to lay before him the Danger he has escaped, not in its immediate but remote Consequences; and you can
no

no way do this so well as by the Instance of some once happy Family whom you have known ruin'd and destroy'd by it. Point the Advantage to him as nothing: For it truly is nothing; and set before him, tho' in distant Terms, the Folly of engaging in a Game in which all that can be won can be of no Use, cannot be wanted, nor can be worth the accepting; when what may be lost in the Chance may prove a Subject of Inquietude. These are Reasons which will not fail to have occur'd in a Man's own Thoughts, but he will pay a new Regard to them when they are offer'd from another, and the more so, as they will come from a Person whom he loves. He will be pleas'd with an Opportunity of doing that which he knows to be right and important; and at the same time obliging you; and you will at once have gain'd your Point, and have added to the greatest of all Treasures, to the Store of his Esteem and Affection.

This, my Dear, would probably be
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the Case, had you the Occasion to press the proper Thought upon a Husband who had begun by wining, but it will be yet an easier Task if he have lost. You had in the other a successful Folly to combat, but you have in this Case only to baffle one that has already punish'd itself; and that the Mind, which had encourag'd it, is naturally sick of. Yet, my Dear, the easiest Duty becomes easier, when we set about it on the proper Foundation, and in the proper Manner.

In the other Case I have advis'd you to use remote and distant Hints, and to name the whole Matter as if it concern'd some other, not himself. In this I am of another Opinion: There was Prudence in a pretended Ignorance then, because your Knowledge of every Event cou'd have answer'd no good Purpose: In this there may be a Merit made of that very Knowledge, and therefore I wou'd not wish you to disguise it.

You wou'd be very wrong to give him

him I leave to think, you had enquir'd after the Nature or the Event of his Engagements. Men of Honour do not these Things in secret; nor among People of Fortune is there much Care taken to make Secrets of them. There must have been Witnesses to the Bet: They may be suppos'd to have named it among their Acquaintance, those to theirs; and in this Manner it will appear very natural that you have heard of the Affair, and of its Consequence; tell him you have, tell him of it freely; and without shewing the least Discomposure, tell him you are glad he has lost. Add, that you shall never suppose you have any Right to meddle in his Engagements, but that as Play is the last Thing you should suppose him capable of falling into, you are very glad that when some Accident had led him into the Precincts of it, the first Stake was to his Disadvantage.

The disinterested Turn which you affect in this will give you Credit with him; and the Pleasantry and Good-Humour

Humour with which you pursue the Discourse, will obtain you a favourable Hearing: He will be pleas'd to hear you rallying a Folly of which himself is sick at that Moment. You will have an Opportunity of pressing upon him in this free Manner, all the Arguments I have pointed out to you before, as what might have been of Force with others, but are unnecessary to him. He will receive them all with a thorough Good-Will: He will admire your Discernment, and he will love your Prudence; and these Thoughts coming together upon him at a Time when he is open to Conviction, and at the single Moment in which Conviction itself cou'd take any Hold upon him; he will acknowledge all their Force, and he will put in Practice all their Admonitions.

'Tis thus, my dearest ***, that the most dangerous Things are conquer'd: when they are oppos'd in Time the slightest Attacks prevail against them; when they are neglected, the strongest
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are ineffectual. Pursue the Plan in every Part of your Life. 'Tis not only this Danger that may be set aside by timely Prudence, and by cautious Endeavours: With a Man of the good Sense, and good Disposition of which your Husband is possessed, there is nothing but may. Keep it in your Mind, that you neglect not, nor postpone the speaking what 'tis proper you should say, and you will seldom speak in vain.

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L E T T E R XIII.

On the general Behaviour and Deportment.

HAVING written to you of so many Things, my dearest * * *, and of these so largely, you will suppose that I have done. Alas, my Dear, the most immediately necessary Part of what I have to say to you is not yet begun. I have prepared for it in all this, and no
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Preparation could be too much, since it is not only the most essential Part that is to come, but it is also that on which it is both most difficult for me to speak, and for you to hear.

You have read in my several Letters to you, what I have been taught by Experience, to be not only the several particular Duties of a Wife; but the Manner in which each of them is to be performed most to your Satisfaction, and to your Advantage. But still, my Dear, this holds but with Regard to Particulars, there is a general Conduct necessary. I have endeavoured to extend the Thought from all these into that larger Consideration, but still these Opportunities could let me do it but imperfectly. Suffer me now that you have seen the Necessity of it, and that I have in some Degree prepared your Mind for it, to enter on it fully. It is more necessary to you than all the rest; nay, possibly, it may be the only Consideration necessary. What I have hitherto said to you

concerning particular Occasions, relates principally to Particulars, and many of them may not; a great Part of them, I am persuaded, will not occur. But still there is a general Deportment necessary to be studied, since that must have its Use, and is called in on all Occasions; if what I have already explained be favourably implanted in your Mind, as I have no Reason to doubt but it is, you will receive the rest favourably.

The Foundation of all lies, my Dear, in this, that there is a real Superiority in the Husband; the Laws of God and Man, establish this, and you must join with all Woman-kind in subscribing to it: To do this happily, is to do it readily; where it comes with Reluctance it is always painful, and it is never perfect. I am sensible that we have natural Pride, and the Men are to blame in that they support and encourage it in our Hearts. What can be so wrong, as for those to place themselves in the Condition of our Slaves, who know that after
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the repeating a few Words, they shall be viewed as our Lords and Masters. They are mean who take a great Advantage of the Custom ; but my Dear, the best and most indulgent of them will keep up the Prerogative, even yours will not refuse himself the Consciousness of it.

To reconcile yourself to it, for with any newly married Woman it goes against the Stomach, consider that it is in Nature, and that the Law of God ordains it. We are weak and useless to the World, they are our Support and our Defence, and to their Prudence, as well as their Strength, are owing our Security, and all the Advantages of Society. This will demand something from us, and that not only Gratitude, but some Degree of Subjection ; besides, my Dearest, Reason is in this authorised by Custom, and that not of one Country, or one Time, but of all the World, and of all Ages ; and that Custom is ratified by Law in all Places. I am sensible it will be easy to object,

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that Men make Laws, and that they will therefore be sure to make them in their own Favour. Be not carried away, my Dear, with such light Opinions ; there are Laws not of Man's making, but of God's, and these, as the others, support and authorise his Superiority on their Side. I thank Heaven, my Dearest, that your Education has not been among those who suppose it a Scandal to be good ; or that they are to disregard their Bible, because it is the Word of their Creator. This Book, my Dear, which is not, like others, capable of Error, gives you the History of a People who did not make their own Laws, but for whom the Creator of the World by his own Voice spoke and established them. You find these People for a long Course of Time under the immediate Government and Direction of God, and in all that Time you will find the Wife obedient to her Husband, and treating him tho', as her Friend and her Companion, yet also as her Superior. The common Title under which the *Hebrew Wives* addressed

dressed their Husbands, and under which
 they spoke of them in their Absence ;
 for these People spoke alike before their
 Faces and behind their Backs, was, *my*
Lord: among the greatest People, and
 among the least, in the most polished, and
 in the most barbarous Climates, still
 this has been preserved, and what has
 been thus ordained both by God and
 Man, what has been agreed to, and
 complied with in all Places, and by all
 People, do not you, my Dear, think it
 hard to consent unto. It is the Custom
 of all the World, and it is the Custom
 of your own Country ; at least it is so
 of the wise and virtuous Women of it ;
 and these, I hope, are those whom you
 would follow. *England*, my dearest * * *,
 is of all the Earth the Place where the
 Husband builds least upon this Preroga-
 tive, where he feels least of his Superi-
 ority, and uses least Authority over his
 Wife : think it happy that you are born
 in so fortunate a Kingdom, but do not
 take the least Step toward carrying that
 Indulgence, which its Customs give you

too far : This would be not only Weakness, but Ingratitude.

I shall not deny but that we have too many Examples of those who do it ; and it is therefore I am the more earnest in advising you to avoid it. Example in Ill is no Authority, my Dear ; nor would you be at all the less faulty, because ten thousand People were faulty with you. You will see an Appearance of Freedom and Independence in these unworthy Wives, which carries a tempting Look with it, but this is all Appearance. A sad Heart lurks beneath these Smiles upon the Countenance, and the Pretence of Happiness being all that is in their Power, they will make the most of that poor Advantage ; but suppose all this Freedom real, is it worth while, my Dear, to purchase it at the Expence of your Peace, and of your Husband's Love ; for that is the sure Price that must be paid for it. Surely, it is not ; a gay Face abroad, is but a poor Reward for a heavy Heart at home,
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and which in the End is the Loss of all this Freedom and this Independence. You will loose Money uncontrouled by him ; but you are still within the Controul of your own Income ; that separate Income which is the Source of all this Folly, and of all this Misery. You can be late abroad, alas ! Is this a Pleasure ? You love your Husband ; and you will always love him, because he will always deserve it : You will therefore find your Home a Place of greater Pleasure than all these Rendezvous. You can receive the Civilities of Strangers. Believe me, Dearest, tho' you can you ought not. I do not suppose them tending to any Thing guilty, and therefore I say nothing of the serious Thoughts that might occur on the Occasion, but be they ever so unmeaning, they are still liable to Misconstruction ; and they are scandalous with this Man whom you regard not ; while they would be a Virtue if directed to the Man you loved.

Be assured, my dearest ***, that these, idle and weak as they are, are yet the three great Sources of that Hate to Superiority which possess the female Heart. When a Husband is considered as a Superior, it's not the Fault, but the Dependance that is connected with it, that ruins all: And yet, my Dear, Ruin is the sure Attendant upon the shaking off that Dependance. If you could be inclined to envy the present Situation of these free Wives, these Libertine Wives, let me call them; for very few of them deserve a better Name; look into the future Period of it, and you will be weaned from the Fondness with which the present might inspire you. If it appear uncertain to look into the Future, consider the Condition of those who have been like them, what is it but Contempt, and a Contempt that will sting to the Heart, because it is deserved. It is not only the Neglect and Disregard of all good People, but even of those who are as faulty as themselves; her nearest Relations

sions are shy of her ; her very Intimates in a former Period ashamed of her. The Malice of the World has encreased, perhaps, no more than Appearance into Guilt, and those who have Reputations will not fully them by her Acquaintance ; those who do not deserve any, will not expose their slender Pretensions, by countenancing one who is suspected. They who themselves want Protection, are not only the last that can, but they are the last that will give it, and be assured in the same Manner that those who want will be the last that will obtain it.

Let not Appearances deceive you ; be assur'd, my Dear, that the Regard of others follows that of your Husband with equal Steps. When he thinks meanly of his Wife, the World will not long think well of her. They know he is the best Judge of what Consideration she truly deserves ; they know that he is interested to think well of her, because his own Character depends in some Degree on hers : They know he will sup-

port her Reputation as long as he can with Justice and Truth, or but with any tolerable Appearance of them : and they are always ready to construe Things to ill : They will suppose he must have more Reasons than they know of for his Disrespect : They will suppose these the worst that it is possible they can be ; and judging upon that Supposition as if it were an established and a certain Truth, they will condemn as if they had Evidence.

All this, my Dear, depends upon the original Principle where I have placed its Root, and from whence I have deduced it. Your Husband will expect you to retain a Sense of his Superiority, and he has a Right to expect it. The less he assumes, the more will be your Merit in allowing it, and the more Pleasure will he have in seeing that you do so. The professing this is fulsome ; but the keeping it in Remembrance is of the first Utility. Your Actions, my Dear, and not your Words, are to convince him
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that you have a due Sense of this Distinction ; and these are an easier Testimony than the other. While he sees that you regard him in this Light, he will know that you will pay him Respect in his Advice ; he will therefore think your Conduct always right, because he will find it always conform to his Opinions ; and he will therefore justify it in every Step, both to his own Ear, and the Worlds.

I know this would be an uneasy, and an hard Task, were you married to an obstinate, or to a churlish Husband ; nay, it would be unjust to impose it, were you married to a weak one ; but I thank Heaven, that I am writing to the virtuous and prudent Wife of the best natured Man in the World, and of one who will not mislead her. After all, my Dear, harsh and ungrateful as this Doctrine of Superiority in an Husband seems in the Name, Is there any great Matter in it ? To a Woman of Understanding, and such, my Dear, you are, altho' you
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have not Years to give Experience, certainly no! 'Tis only in the Name it seems difficult or dishonourable to our Sex. Certainly in this Sense; and be assured, my Dear, your future Years will shew you, in the Lives of yourselves, and of others, that this is the true Sense of the Duty; far from demeaning, she honours herself who submits to it freely and fully: She does Honour to herself in the very Action, more than to her Husband, since it is much more to act up to ones Duty, than to see that done by another. Peace and Happiness and Reputation, are the assured Consequences of it; and are not these worth the obtaining? On the other Part, let us consider her, whose Pride, or whose Folly, setting her above herself, and above the World, urge her to refuse it: What is the Act, and what are its Consequences; in denying the Duty she wrongs no one but herself, and herself alone feels the ill Consequences. Her Husband despises her, and the Contempt of the World follows. I am sorry to add to this, my
 Dear,

Dear, nor need I add it to you, for you will not come into this dangerous Situation, nor, if you could, would it follow. But altho' I grieve and blush to name it, it is too true, that absolute Guilt is often the Consequence ; and that this is the great Root from which it generally springs. There may be Women naturally vicious, but this can be no common Case ; the most are led to it by this Occasion. The Husband disregards, the Stranger sollicit ; the World denies her Reputation, and she forfeits her Claim to it. It appears as well to her to be criminal, and be censured and despised, as to be censured and despised without being criminal ; and being only on the Precipice, she plunges into the Ocean of Destruction. You see, my Dear, of what Consequence, what universal Importance it is to you, to preserve the good Opinion of your Husband. 'Tis not only that this is the Foundation of Esteem, and that Esteem the rational and sure Base of Love, but your Reputation, as well as your Happiness depends upon

on it. It is the Disposer of all your publick, as well as your private Concerns, and all is linked to it : To be reckoned virtuous, we must first be allowed innocent, and in the same Manner, to be allowed Merit, we must first do our Duty ; to do it, we must know it ; and this not so easy as it may appear to inconsiderate Minds. Perhaps you would have scarce imagined that so much as I have been relating to you, depended upon your retaining a Sense of your Husband's natural and just Superiority. Perhaps you at first questioned my Judgment and my Candour, in placing it before you, as a Consideration of such Necessity. I have shewn you its Consequences, and nothing can be more weighty. You will see as I have placed them, that all these depend upon your Breach, or your Observance of that, and you will in Consideration of these, find the natural Disagreeableness of the Task nothing.

Why

Why should we suppose ourselves placed above all Things in the World? Why should we suppose ourselves equal to the highest? Certainly, my Dear, we are not so: And if we are to acknowledge Superiority any where, Why is it not as easy, Why is it not more eligible to own it where there is most Love to temper it, and where the Advantages are all, and the Honour is in a very great Measure our own? I know, my Dear, that I have written upon a Subject which will appear a rough one: I hope I have made it smooother than it was: I am sure I have done what to a reasonable Mind will have as much Effect; I have convinced you of its Necessity.

LETTER

L E T T E R X I V .

On Conformity of Tempers.

IF it appeared to you, my Dear, that my last Letter was upon a Subject of great Difficulty, you will say this has for its Purpose the recommending an Impossibility, but you are mistaken: The first was only hard at the Appearance; and this only seems impossible. You know I set out in these Letters with telling you that if you would be happy, it must be on the Principles of your own Judgment, not of that of other Peoples; and that it was incumbent upon you to pay the due Regard to your own Opinion. Nothing is so common as are the established Sentiments of the World, but nothing is so false. Fools are guided by them, and they are their Destruction: Be you wise, my Dear, that you may be happy.

It is the Custom of your Sex to suppose the Superiority of an Husband imposed by Tyranny, and mean in the Obedervance.

servance. I have shewn you that it has its Origin in Reason, in Justice, in Nature, and in the Law of God: And I have pointed out to you the Considerations under which you see it easy in the Practice, and honourable in the Acknowledgment. The Task I have now to impose on you appears yet more difficult: It will be called romantic; but it is natural, it is easy, it will succeed, and there will be Pleasure in the Exercise of it, and the greatest Advantages in the End.

There is not a more common Observation than that Peoples Tempers are unalterable, and that when they are unlike, there is nothing but Uneasiness in the Union. They will say that it is as easy to alter a Person's Face as Disposition; and they say right: But when they make that an Example of Impossibility, they are strangely mistaken. What is so common as for married Persons to be mistaken for Brother and Sister? What is so common an Observation as that such a Man is very like his Wife, or
such

such a Woman is the Picture of her Husband. Let me explain this to you. I have heard a very sensible Man, your Uncle, resolve it into a very odd Principle, for such an Occasion ; into the Satisfaction which all People have in their own Form : but this, though ingenious enough, is erroneous. He observed that the best Face became better, and the worst more tolerable by Acquaintance : I have told you that I soon looked away an Imperfection in the Limbs of a Person to whom I was accustomed ; and 'tis as easy to soften or obliterate any Blemish in the Face of another, or even to convert Things, in themselves indifferent, into Beauties : If we can do this, by a long Acquaintance with the Faces of others, much more may we arrive at it with the longer Acquaintance with our own. All its Faults, depend upon it, my Dear, die away before the frequent View of it in the Glass, all its indifferent Parts are raised into Beauties, and all its real Beauties become vastly greater.

You

You will wonder whither I am wandering, but do not ; I shall come back with Strength to the Purpose with which I set out. It is owing to this Deceit, which is the Child of Familiarity, that we all think ourselves handsomer than we really are ; or to give it a gentler Term, we think ourselves more agreeable than other People think us : Do not be hurt by it, my Dear ; but, depend upon it, there is nobody that thinks even you so handsome as you think yourself. What we suppose agreeable in our own Faces we naturally think so too in those of other People. What pleases us in ourselves pleases us also in them ; and 'tis hence that your Uncle derived the common Likenesses between Men and their Wives. He supposed that a Woman, among a Multitude of Faces that had equal Claim to her Attention, was most pleased with that which was most like her own ; or in other Words, thought that the most agreeable which approached most to the Idea that she had affixed in her own
Mind

Mind to the Word agreeable. If we suppose, says he, that the same Rule of thinking holds good with regard to the Men, and there is no Reason to doubt it, we shall find it most natural that People who are alike in the Face should marry.

I have observed that there was something ingenious in this System, but it is groundless. Neither Man nor Woman are so far byass'd by Partiality to themselves as he would represent; nor are Matches in general made in this Manner. I don't think there is much room to glory in it on either Side; but it is certain that Accidents, and those the most trivial in the World, often throw People in the Way of one another. A Man happens to be at this Ridotto, or he is invited to that Rout: Chance, as absolute Chance as his own, brings a Woman to the same Place, whose Face, whose Air, or whose Conversation pleases him; or oftener than all these, whom some little Incident throws in his Way
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for Conversation. I have been told of a Match, vastly to the Advantage of the Lady, that arose from her Advice how to play a Hand at Whift; and one of the luckiest, on the Man's Part, that this Age has produced, was owing to his treading on a Lady's Toe in an Assembly.

Such Accidents as these put People in one another's Way, who are afterwards pleased with each others Qualifications; and what was nothing in the first Step, advances into Marriage, and the making of Families and Fortunes. There is nothing in all this that regards the Form or Figure; nay, 'tis just otherwise; you oftener see it otherwise: See the blackest Men married to the fairest Women; the biggest to the least: This speaks against the Prejudice in favour of what is most like ourselves; but yet, whatever may be the Case with those who are courting, 'tis evidently the Truth, that very many are alike who are married. Nay, that this Resemblance,

blance, which was not at all seen before, is taken notice of by every body afterwards.

I shall explain it to you, my Dear, and this long Digression from my Point will make extreamly for my Purpose. 'Tis not that People grow larger or smaller in their Size, or that their Features alter their Shape, Proportion, or Dimensions upon Marriage, for that is impossible; but this is the Source of the Observation. There is something in the Face, that contributes more to a Likeness than Features or Complexion; and this is in our Power: 'Tis what we call the Air and Manner of the Face; and is, if you will know it truly, the Character of the Mind expressing itself in the Countenance: This is that Air and Look which is more peculiar than any Set of Features can be; and is more striking, more pleasing, or more distasteful; and which, as it does not depend upon any thing external, may be acquired.

You

You have read of Physiognomists, Persons who could tell Peoples Temper, Character, and Disposition, by the Lines of their Faces ; nay more, could foretel the Fortune of their succeeding Lives, by the same Observation : And even this, though carried too far by the Artful, and believed too firmly by the Credulous, is not without Foundation in Nature and Reason. 'Tis the Temper which gives this Air to the Face, Nature bestows the Features, but this communicates the Manner ; 'tis, in reality, the Soul speaking in the Aspect : And as the Temper always depends upon the Passions ; and the future Events of Life too much also upon our Management of them, 'tis not a Wonder that all this may be discovered in the Countenance.

As this Air and Manner is not a fixed Thing, like the Features, it may be liable to Changes ; and I have known them. They do not happen often, and they are long in bringing about, but

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when they are fixed, they are as visible in their Effects as those of which they have taken the Place. I have seen a very agreeable Woman become ugly by a Change of this Kind, without the Assistance of Age or the Small-Pox; and I could, at this Time, point you out one of the plainest Women of your Acquaintance, whom almost every body is in love with, merely for a Change of this Kind.

You will see at what I have been labouring in all this: It is to tell you that the Air of a Face may be changed, and that of another acquired. 'Tis thus between the Husband and the Wife most frequently: 'Tis thus they become like one another after a Time, altho' they had not the least Resemblance when they met. If they mutually love, they will be often looking upon one another; and esteeming what they love, they will be imitating it. From this they will, by degrees, acquire each so much of the other's Temper and Manner, that their Countenances
will

will have the same Expression : Any one of them, by a thorough Affection and Regard for the other, might have come to this natural Likeness in Length of Time ; but when the Advances are on both Sides, they quickly meet.

This, my Dear, is my System for explaining that frequent Likeness which we see between Men and their Wives ; and I think it much more rational than that wild Scheme of Chance on which some People would throw it ; or that dishonourable Imagination of Self-Love and Self-Admiration, which is the Source of it, according to others. You will say, Do you not remember, Madam, that you set out with a Design of giving me your Advice about bringing us to a Conformity of Temper ? I have told you, my Dear, how you may, and how People who are married do, get a Likeness of Countenance ; and in that I have done it. You will understand me, my Dear, that by often looking at your Husband's Face, by smiling on the Oc-

casions on which he smiles, by frowning on those Things which make him frown, and by viewing all Things in the Light in which you see he views them, you will acquire that Likeness of Countenance which it is an Honour to possess, because it is a Testimony of Love; and, my dearest ***, when you have arrived at this, you will have effected that, which on my first naming it to you, seemed an Impossibility; you will have arrived at that Conformity of Temper, on which so very great a Portion of married Happiness depends.

LETTER XV.

On Conformity of Sentiments.

MY Dear, I have shewn you of what infinite Importance a Conformity of Temper is to those who are to be happy in an exact Proportion to the mutual Agreement of their Dispositions; but there is yet a greater and a nobler

nobler Field for the pursuing this Resemblance; and while the Glory, the Pleasure, and the Advantages attending on it, are infinitely greater than those were that resulted from the other, the Means are easier.

Conformity of Temper is no more than the Resemblance in a fancyful and idle Part of our Composition: 'Tis directed often by Whim; and is sometimes influenced even by the Body: But there is a higher Point of Resemblance, that of the Soul, the Mind, and Sentiments. These are fixed, and as their Form is known, the Way to arrive at them is open; and they are honourable, for they are, when of the nobler Kind, Virtue. When you have accommodated yourself to the Temper of your Husband, you will soon arrive at thinking with him. When you have acquired his Disposition, his Sentiments will follow. I do not say that in all Things a wise and virtuous Woman is to conform to the Opinion of her Husband, for he may be foolish or

be vicious, and his Love will not last if purchas'd on the Terms of copying him in the first; nor is even the Love of such an Husband pretious, or is it worth purchasing at the Price of the latter. But this, my Dear, is not your Case. Yet beware. As there may be in the best Men some Things which, though Trifles, resemble those in the worst; the Caution holds with regard to these; and if there be any thing which your own Discretion, for I can trust to it on this Head, represents to you as amiss in him, instead of imitating it, propose in your own Conduct some opposite Merit, and let that be what he shall be most tempted to imitate in you. I propos'd, you know, my Dear, the making Advances on both Sides, towards that perfect Similitude I hop'd to see between you, and this is the Method by which it is best to be accomplish'd: While on this Foundation your Love brings you to resemble one another, you will both become wiser and better by the Imitation.

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After this Caution, which I know your modest Opinion of your own good Qualities will teach you to use sparingly, there is nothing that will be so much to your Honour, or to your Advantage, as the making yourself as like to the Lord of your Wishes in Soul and Sentiment, as you will have done in Countenance. I have ventured to prescribe to you an Acknowledgment of Superiority; and in consequence of that, the hard-founding Virtue of a Wife's Obedience. All Things will grow easy, my Dear, in Practice; the Conduct, which I am at this Time recommending to you, will effect all those without once giving you a Sense of their Difficulty, or of the natural Reluctance which attends the executing them. To think as you find your Husband thinks, on the several Occasions of Life, is to pay the Acknowledgment of that Superiority which he expects in the highest Point in that which will flatter his Self-love most, and that most worthily; and will reflect most

Honour upon him : And it is paying an Obedience without the Name, nay, without the very Character of that Duty. While your Mind is actuated by the same Sentiments with his, your Conduct will be what those Sentiments dictate and inspire, without its seeming to be done by Compulsion. Your natural Deportment will be that of Obedience without the Name ; and, believe me, my Dear, 'tis not the Name they expect, but the Thing. While you follow the Dictates of your own Mind, you will be acting perfectly according to his. This is the true Obedience of a Wife ; this is the honourable Superiority of an Husband ; and what is there mean, or what is there difficult in this ? nothing.

You see, my Dear, that the Duties of a Wife, however disgustful in the Name, are easy and honourable in themselves, and 'tis not possible they should be otherwise, for they are from Nature ; and whatever ill-inform'd Minds or misguided

guided Imaginations may figure to themselves, whatever is from Nature is at once convenient and becoming. It serves our Purposes, and it does Honour to our Submission.

Now that I have establish'd this bug-bear Doctrine of Obedience to you, on this its true and rational Foundation; when I have told you, and, I will not doubt, convinced you, how necessary, how proper, and how advantageous it is; when I have said all that is disagreeable in it to your Satisfaction; and in this last Article reduc'd its very Essence into Conformity of Disposition; and shewn you that when you are wise to obey your Husband, is no more than to pursue the Dictates of your own Reason, and act according to your own Inclination; when I have thus taken away, not only the Nature but the very Name of this hard Duty, so far as they imply any Thing hard in them, permit me to extend the Bounds of the Thing itself, perhaps farther than others have thought.

of: Deterred by the false Appearances they have not dar'd to propole the real Subject, and have sacrific'd to them what was essential.

Now that I have explain'd away all that is disagreeable in the Obedience of a Wife, I shall tell you, that there is no one ever expected so much of it as I do; and what I have prescrib'd to you, my Dear, I have myself practis'd. I do assure you, it is Pleasure in the Performance, and it is no little Matter in the Reward. It is not enough that a Wife in all Things does what her Husband requests, that is at the best, in the Language of the greatest Judge in the World, being but an unprofitable Servant. I have recommended to you, my Dear, a Conformity of Mind, Temper and Sentiment; that you may be able to execute all that an Husband can request, without the making it a Matter of Obedience. Is it not better to anticipate than to comply with Request: Is it not more pleasant as well as more honourable,

nourable, to do that of your own Inclination which wou'd be a natural Subject of his Command. Pursue the Path I have marked out to you, my Dear, and this will be the Consequence ; you will acquaint yourself with his very Soul : You will resemble him in all his Sentiments ; his Opinions, his Determinations will be all yours ; and you will act as he wou'd wish without his naming it.

Few Husbands have the Surlinefs to command a Wife : One of the good Disposition of yours, will be cautious and tender of Requesting, for fear it should be something disagreeable to you. How prudent to obviate the Arrogance of the first ; How happy must it be to prevent the Wishes of the latter. 'Tis taking from the Hands of Duty that which she wou'd have required, and giving it into the Lips of Favour. 'Tis making that a Merit, which in the other Case could only have been Compliance.

When you have form'd your Temper

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and your Thoughts, my Dear, upon those of your Husband, according to the Plan I have laid down, you will find that you have no Will, no Pleasure, but what is also his. This is the Character the Wife of Prudence wou'd assume: She wou'd make herself the faithful Mirror, to shew, unalter'd and without Aggravation, Diminution or Distortion, the Thoughts, the Sentiments, and the Resolves of her Husband. She wou'd have no particular Design, no Opinion, no Thought, no Passion, no Approbation, no Dislike, but what should be his own reflected Judgment. This wou'd be prudent, and it wou'd be virtuous, but this wou'd be servile: There is a Meanness in such a Submission that disgraces a free Agent; nay, there is a Meanness that degrades the rational Creature: Far be it from me, my Dear, ever to prescribe that to you which shou'd deface your Reason: Heaven gave it for your Guide, and I wou'd have you use it so: God made it your Distinction from all other Creatures, and keep up
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the Prerogative: There are many Ways to the same End: You will find, my Dear, that I have advis'd you to the Attainment of the same Advantage, by the Use of your Reason, which this wou'd make the Effect of your sacrificing it: And you will by this know, that while I propose to you all the Duties of the Wife, nay, and propose them even in their fullest Extent; I expect nothing from you in the fulfilling them, that needs to make a reasonable Creature blush, or that even Pride itself would wish to avoid.

The Wife, on my Principles, my dearest ***, should be in all her Thoughts, in all her Actions, the Attendant and true Resemblance of her Husband; she shou'd no more depart from him than the Shadow from the Substance; nor shou'd she any more than that can be unlike to him. Let Reason be the Sun that gives its Being to this Attendant; and the Purity of the one will as surely, as the unalter'd Form
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of the other, make it retain the Lineaments. The Wife who thus in all Things that concern their mutual Welfare, applies to the Husband, and from him obtains her Motion, Form and Figure, will in all Things be to him what he is unto himself, a second Body animated by the same Soul. Nor let this appear an uneasy Situation to her. His Approbation is her greatest Honour, and 'tis the Source of her most lasting Happiness; this she will assuredly acquire from it; and to you, my Dear, it will not appear difficult. You whom I have convinced, that there is a natural Superiority in your Husband; will not be averse to acknowledge it in these which are the only Occasions on which it can demand your Vote in its Favour: You will be happy to have the Load of Thought taken from you, by one who is enabled by Nature and by his Education to think better; and you will be glad of having the Task of a Decision taken from you, in a Thing wherein it was at once precarious and important.

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There are, my Dear, these Occurrences in the Way of a marry'd Life: There are Occasions in which you are mutually engaged in the Event of what is doing; and in which both must concur to the same End, if ever you hope to see it brought about. There are not many of these, but when they happen they are important: 'Tis in these, and it is only in these, that the Wife has Occasion to exert her private Faculties and Interests; and 'tis in these that I wou'd have her Judgment seem the reflecting Mirror to his Determinations; and her Form the Shadow to his Body; conforming itself to his several Positions, and following it in all its Motions.

I except from the Occasions of this perfect, and uncontroverting Obedience, those Occurrences in which the future Subsistence of herself, or the Care for an unborn Posterity may demand her Attention. Yet even in these I wou'd not have her own Will contradict him;
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but the Advice of her best Friends and of the wisest Counsellors: In this there is no immediate Step for her to take: All that is requir'd, is to with-hold for the present her Obedience; and her Reason, as well as her Duty, will instruct her to do this in the gentlest Manner, and to make it appear, not to be her Reluctance, but that of others. In all else, believe me, my dearest ***, that the most perfect and implicit Faith in the Superiority of an Husband's Judgment, and the most absolute Obedience to his Desires, is not only the Conduct that will insure you most Success, but will give you most Satisfaction. It will take from you a thousand Cares which cou'd have answer'd no Purpose; it will relieve you from a Weight of Thought that wou'd be very painful and no Way profitable, and it will assure to you the Esteem with the Affection of your Husband. These are, my Dear, the Points at which you will aim; not only as you are good, but as you are prudent; 'tis not only a Virtue to pay
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Attention to them, but an Act of Interest. These are the Points I have in all these Letters labour'd to assist you in attaining, and shall in the few that follow. I have regarded them as they concern Trifles, and as they determine in the most important Matters: I have advis'd you to the Methods of attaining them, as well the easy as the difficult; and I have ventur'd to recommend, nay, and to press upon you in the strongest Manner what are esteem'd the most disagreeable Part of a Wife's Duty, so far as it has Respect unto these. You know my Motive is Love: You know my Tutor is Experience; and while I know, my Dear, that you have Gratitude and Attention; that you know what is your own Good; and believe that what I have seen in the World, may give me the Opportunities of assisting you by my Advice, you will regard it. My Dear farewell.

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LETTER

LETTER XVI.

*Of being in public and in private in an
Husband's Company.*

I Have recommended to you, my Dear, a general Attention to your Husband's Temper, and a Conformation to his Sentiments. You will by the first inform yourself of his general Thoughts and Inclinations; and in the last, you will fulfil his Pleasure in them, while you are even pursuing your own. Give me Leave, after so many general Admonitions, to descend to some Particulars; for this is to bring Knowledge to Practice, and to reduce Theory to Use.

You will not suppose, that by my advising you to be as the Shadow to your Husband's Person, in those Things in which you are both naturally and necessarily concerned, that I wish you to be so in all Things: Far otherwise. The Importance and the Necessity of the Occasion will warrant it on this: But what
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is Virtue under these Circumstances, would be Impertinence in others; and tho' it is now a Comfort and a Satisfaction to both, it would be, in Trifles, a slavish Attendance in the one, and offensive to the other. It is not enough, my Dear, to know what to do, we must know when to do it. If by recommending it to you to be like the Shadow to your Husband's Person, you should understand me literally, or advising you never to depart from him, you would turn that into a Trouble, which properly excited, were a Virtue; and would sacrifice your Peace by an imprudent Use of that which prudently observed would insure it.

As this has led me to think of the being with your Husband, let me take Occasion to speak upon that Head. 'Tis the most nice and difficult Part of all the Conduct of a Wife, and there is none on which so much of her Peace depends. In this, as in all other Occurrences, my Dear, make it your first Point to consult

sult what I have laid down as your general Rule. Enquire how much, how often, when, and on what Occasions your Husband wishes that you should be with him ; and make that the Rule of being so. Nothing is so distasteful to a Man of Spirit as the fond Company of a Wife, and nothing is so painful to an affectionate Husband as her Absence, when he wishes to be with her. Consider these, for all depends on them. The Fashion of the World has in a Manner banished the Husband from the Wife's Company in publick Places. Don't let your Fondness want to break in upon an established Custom, even tho' it be an ill one ; but if he have that Resolution, receive it with Acknowledgments, such as a Love that shews itself to be above the ordinary Rate deserves ; and encourage it by the Pleasure with which you shew that you receive it.

When you have Parties for any of the publick Places, never invite him to be of them, for it will be a Pain to him to
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say no ; nor is it your Interest to accustom him to Refusals : But tho' you never ask him to be with you, I would have you religiously observe to tell him of them ; never omit this, my Dear, nor ever disguise the Party. He will by this be always sure where he shall find you if he please : I doubt not but he will frequent those Places where he knows you are, rather than others : I would have you always expect it ; always imagine that he is present, and that your Conduct is altogether under his Eye. If he come in alone, let him first look about him, and then ask him to join your Party ; 'tis probable he comes with that Intent : It appears, at least, that he sees no other whom he is disposed to join, and you will at once speak your Affection, and insure his Pleasure. If he come in with others, let your Eyes only as you pass by one another, declare your Joy in seeing him. If he should chance to leave his Party, and mix himself with yours, be not ashamed to confess your Satisfaction in the Preference he gives you :

you : Let him see with what superior Pleasure a Wife receives him above all other People, and he will pay you a proportioned Regard.

Although nothing can give a Man of Sense who loves you, a greater Pleasure than the seeing that you prefer his Company to that of all the World, yet nothing is so tiresome as the solliciting it, when he is not disposed to give it you. The worst Wife in the World will be agreeable in some Degree to her Husband, if she never forces herself upon him, but is in his Way when he is inclined to talk with her; and the best in the World will grow tiresome, if she will be the Disposer of his Hours without his Inclination. Men often chuse to be alone, and they have often Reason : Why would you interrupt their necessary Thoughts : They have fixed their Minds on Parties that are in themselves indifferent, which will be very disagreeable to them to be interrupted ; they will now and then be on those Schemes
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which are whimsical, rather than of any real Ill ; and why would she, who is not to be a Sufferer by them, make herself a Sufferer by the Interruption.

To have your Husband always pleased with your Company, my Dear, the great Secret is to let him have it only when he pleases. 'Tis a very easy one to practise, and yet who is there attends to it. Believe me, my Dear, the Peace of Families is oftner sacrificed to these Trifles, than to any real Discontent, or real Faults.

As I am an Advocate for the most unbounded Liberty on the Man's Part, in regard to his going out and staying out, you shall find that I am not quite unreasonable as to the Ladies. I am no Friend to that vast Distinction which has been kept up between the Conduct of the Husband and the Wife on parallel and unimportant Occasions ; and I would have her as little denied those Liberties which are innocent and prudent, as her

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Husband. You see I am an Advocate for you as well as for him, and when I point you out your Duty, would be as free in shewing your Indulgences. The rigid Moralists have said, the good Wife should be like the Tortoise, slow in her Motions, and careful of her Habitation : The Emblematical ones have painted her with her Feet naked ; and those who have penetrated deeper into the Secrets of Nature, in Search after Comparisons, have called in the laborious Ant as an Instance of Propriety. The Male of this Insect they say has Wings, the Female none. Nature therefore they would infer, intended him to be a Rambler, and her to mind the Affairs at Home. And they would transfer the Obligation to Creatures endued with Reason. These are pretty Fancies, my Dear, but till we are Mahometans, and are persuaded that Women have no Souls, I shall not be for our taking Example from an Insect.

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The Writers of those Times, my Dear, were Men, and they consulted the Pleasure of their own Sex alone. I am a Female Moralist, and while I point you out so rigidly as I have done it, your Duty, I shall not be remiss in telling you what may be your allowable Pleasures. Those People wrote to the Imagination, I would direct my Thoughts to the Heart: They wrote to Men, I am advising one of my own Sex: They knew nothing of the Scenes in which they pretended to instruct, I am writing to you of what I experienced. Don't wonder, my Dear, that I take this Pains to convince you of the Truth of what you will naturally be ready to believe: I know your cautious Disposition, and I would have you convinced as well of the Propriety and Innocence of your Pleasures, as of the Necessity of your Duty.

You are not married, my Dear, to a Rustick, or an Ignorant ; your Husband knows the Method of Life in which

he found you, and as he was not displeased with you at that Time, he will not now be dissatisfied that you continue it. There are no Pleasures an unmarried Person educated as you have been, could give yourself Leave to enjoy, which will be improper for his Wife to continue; nor would it be a handsome Compliment to him, to let the World, who had been used to see you partake of them, at this time perceive that you had let them alone. It would look as if he was averse to them; and would you have it supposed that he was a Niggard, or was jealous! which of these Suspicions would you chuse! and you may be sure the World would lay it upon one of them.

You have been accustomed to the Oratorio, I would have you be at least as often there as ever: The Play-house I would have you regulate on the same Plan; and I would have you seen, at least, at one of the Ridotto's. This leads me to a Diversion, of which I think you have been too fond, but I must
name

name it; Perhaps I am grown out of Fashion by my having out-liv'd these Diversions; but whether it be Prejudice or Reason, I have always been uneasy at your going so frequently to the Masquerades. Whether I have been right or not in that Opinion, of this I am sure, that I have Reason on my Side, when I desire you not to be so fond of them, or so frequent in your Visits to them now.

You mistake me greatly, my Dear, if you think me so very an old Woman, as to suppose that any Thing absolutely ill ever happens at these Places. I know upon what I ground my Caution to you, and I know that it has Reason. Altho' there were no Harm, nor any Advance toward Harm, at these Places, Part of the World has an Opinion that there is; and this, my Dear, is enough to make any Woman of true Prudence avoid them: But there is a great deal more. Tho' I am convinced no real Ill happens there, yet, my Dear, the World is not easily per-

fwaded, that the boldest of all Advances toward it are not made there : I know they are. I have not liv'd among the gay World so long, without hearing those Things in Conversation which I have never given myself Opportunities to be otherwise acquainted with. I have trembled to hear the Designs which have been laid for the making the worst Use of these Places. I have been told of the Address to the Masque, which he who made it, dar'd not have spoke to the naked Face ; and I know what there is against the Woman who will give herself Leave to hear.

I am sorry to confess what you know, my Dear, too well already, that all Women are fond of Flattery ; they love it even tho' they know it to be so ; and if they have no Opinion of the Sincerity of the Person from whom they receive it, still they do him Credit for his Complaisance. The Ear of every Woman is open this Way to the Insinuation of the Artful : Nay, I shall go farther, every Woman loves to be courted : Tho' she despise

despise the Lover, and detest his Intentions, still there is a Pleasure in being solicited and treated as a Divinity. Let the Woman who has not found it so, condemn me for flandering my Sex. Remember, that a Masquerade is the Place of all others most favourable for this Sort of Folly ; and remember that tho' a Lady's Virtue is in no Danger, her Reputation may suffer irreparably from it. A Masquerade, is almost the only Place where a Man has an Opportunity of entertaining a Woman alone. 'Tis the only Place in which a Man, who is an absolute Stranger, can speak to you. The Custom of the World allows a Liberty in the Discourse there, that cou'd not be permitted any where else in the World : There is an Air of great Pleasantry, and great Security, in saying the most tender and the boldest Things between Jest and Earnest ; and he will stop at nothing whose Insolence you encourage, while you suffer it, and whose Presumption is nothing, while in a Moment he can turn

it all to Raillery; and as soon as he finds he cannot succeed, pretend that he never design'd it.

The Woman who is mask'd, under the Pretence of being between known and unknown, will bear a thousand Things; which if she was under a Necessity of confessing who she was, she cou'd not: And the Assistance of this to the Liberty which he takes, who pretends to be between Jest and Earnest, gives Opportunities to Things the most intolerable.

What Woman of Prudence, my Dear, wou'd throw herself into the Way of every Man who may have been pleas'd with her Person, and who has a Mind to attempt her Virtue, under Conditions in which the very Nature of the Attack takes off the Power of resenting it, as you otherwise, I am well assur'd, wou'd resent it. To what Purpose wou'd you bear the Flattery of Persons who are to continue indifferent to you. When
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I write to you, my Dear, I know this is all the Danger that there is need to warn you of, but it wou'd not be so with all Women. The Men who have the Assurance to make these Attacks, are generally those who have a Figure, a Rank, or an Address to recommend them ; and this begets an Acquaintance, which cou'd not otherwise have been begun, and which may be fatal in its Consequences. The Man who has taken this Opportunity to say all the thousand Things to her, which he wou'd not have dar'd to whisper otherwise, is often in her Way afterwards ; at the least, she sees an agreeable Man who she knows thinks favourably of her ; and he is less indifferent to her than other People. If he have that Assurance, which may be well expected to attend the other, he comes up to her the next Time he sees her, and claims the Merit of his Acquaintance : He swears to the serious Meaning of all that he pretended was Raillery ; and she is drawn in to listen to the full Recital of that which it is by

no Means proper she shou'd have heard at all ; and which she otherwise never wou'd have heard, no, not in a Whisper. I know not what the Consequences may be, and I tremble to think of them.

But, my Dear, this is not all. This is a Danger to which you wou'd not be expos'd, because this is a Language you wou'd not hear : But, beside the Men of Intrigue, there are Coxcombs in the World ; and these will be as fatal to your Reputation, as the others to the Virtue of those who are less guarded in their Tempers. You will not pretend that one of this Stamp cannot have an Opportunity of talking to you at a Masquerade, a Place where you know not who it is that does talk to you. He will assume the Air of a familiar Acquaintance ; and how can you know, under the Habit, that he is not such : He will get from some one of your Acquaintance, some Piece of secret and unmeaning Intelligence ; 'tis the
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the Cant of the Place, and People are as ready to give as to ask it, that they may have the Diversion of perplexing those they know. He gets your Ear by this, and he says nothing to offend you. The most trifling Thing that can be spoken he delivers with all the Caution and Complaisance of a Thing of Importance ; you are teiz'd with his Impertinence, and yet seeming an Acquaintance, you do not affront him or shake him off. You have done yourself irreparable Injury. These are a Set of People who wish or desire nothing more than to have the Honour of being seen with you. As the Rake attempts your Virtue, these attack your Reputation only ; and it is lost not because you are unwilling to defend it, but because you are insensible of the Danger.

You may be assur'd, your Person occasions your being talked of among those who know a good Person only, as an Object of Desire ; and tho' they cannot get at you for an Attempt, or

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wou'd not dare to make it if they could, yet they will talk in this Sort of Strain. They'll tell the Fop, who has been entertaining you, that he's an happy Fellow, and he'll not contradict them. His own Vanity will not suffer him to give up such a Title to their Envy. He affects to have been courting you, and he believes he shall succeed, but it requires Time — You People of Fashion are subjected to so many Forms: Husbands are such troublesome People: And Women of any Degree of Merit set such a Value upon themselves, that he knows not when he shall bring it about.

This is the Language of that insolent Set of Fools: Wretches, who without the Spirit of even daring to be wicked, will produce all the Effects of Crimes in others; and altho' they never insnare or attempt the Innocence of a Chambermaid, will destroy the Character of a Dutches. Thus, my Dear, you will be spoken to, for all the Prudence in the World, all yours cannot prevent it; and in Consequence

quence of being thus spoken to, you will be thus spoken of. While you have not been affronted with the least Attempt, your Husband will be told of your having a Lover. These Things are so little Secrets, that he will probably enough hear of the Expectations of your imaginary Gallant, as well as his Designs: And will he suppose that you know nothing of the Matter? 'Tis lucky for you if he have this Discernment; but if it should be otherwise, What have you sacrific'd, and to what have you sacrific'd it?

I mention this Consequence of frequenting Masquerades to you, my Dear, as one that is unavoidable: Were I writing to a Woman of less virtuous Sentiments, or of less Discretion, I should say a great deal more; but to you 'tis needless: Grosser Faults cannot come into your Way, because the Occasions of them would be avoided. By, my dearest ***, putting it at this, you will find sufficient Reason in my speaking less

favourably of these Diversions than you think of them; or shall I say, than you have been used to think of them. After all this, I do not mean to debar you entirely from them. I am not so rigid as to suppose a married Woman should be entirely deny'd them, but I would have them less a Matter of Importance. I would have you go only to one in the Season; let that be the second, and take your Husband with you. I don't mean that you should join him to you for the Evening; that would be disagreeable to himself at such a Place. Only let the World see, let him see, and do you yourself remember that you are under his Eye, and that your Conduct cannot appear in a wrong Light to him, unless it be in itself blameable.

I have named to you, my Dear, the principal of the publick Places, indeed almost the only I would wish you to be at: I cannot be fond of the Summer Evenings at *Ranelagh* or at *Vaux-ball*: There is something unnatural
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and mean in People of Virtue and Decency mixing with the Herd of common Prostitutes, and abandoned Rakes who are seen barefaced there, and even make you the Confidants of their Appointments. But you will be in the Country in the Time of these, and it is happy to be out of the Way of them. As to the Extravagancies of Fancy with which People are sometimes entertained in the Town-Season ; I do not think it is to a Woman of Fashion's Credit to be seen to countenance them : It is not worth while to sit an Evening to see Dogs dance ; and in a Morning, if one Comedian mimicks the rest, you should consider that they are all beneath your Notice. 'Tis much more to your Credit, as well as your Advantage, to be settling your Accounts and regulating your Family : These are Diversions for Men : Indeed, if I have been rightly informed who the Women are that most frequent them, their Appearance is the best of all Reasons for your Absence.

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As to Visits I have mentioned that Part of your Conduct already ; and you have convinced me, by your Practice, that you are of my Opinion. The Park I think an agreeable and a healthful Walk for an Hour at Noon ; but I would not have you always seen there. If I would be very much against an unmarried Woman's making her Face too common, I am yet more against it when she is married. There is, I think, but one Rendezvous which I have not named, and that I shall name with the greatest of all Disapprobation : Auctions. The *India-Houses* were, at one time, the great Places of loitering away a Morning ; but the cheapning Fans and buying Screens, was not found to be all that the virtuous Ladies meant by frequenting them. They became infamous, because it was discover'd that Men were met there ; and tho' this did not happen to one Woman in a thousand by Appointment, all the rest shar'd the Censure. There are Toyshops in *London* which

which I shou'd advise you against visiting, as strictly as if the *India* Houses were reviv'd among us, and for the same Reason: But I need not name them to you, they are sufficiently particular. What these do for a few, the Auctions do for all the Town; and 'tis not so barefac'd; the very Chairmen see it at the other Places. You will see why I request it of you to avoid them; and you will allow that I have Reason: It wou'd be impossible to advance one Argument in Favour of your going to them. They are injurious to Trade, and therefore 'tis not fit they should be encourag'd: They are known Places of Deceit to the Unwary, and you cannot be upon your Guard against them. Your Husband is best Judge where and how it is proper to buy; and you are not to go to these Places to find out what you did not know that you wanted. Were there no Reason against them, but the Money that is squander'd away, it were sufficient, but this is the least. 'Tis certain that ill Women frequent them, to
meet

meet those whom they cannot, with Decency, or with Prudence, see at their own Houses. You, my Dear, will not ever wish to see such Persons any where; but you will be among the Innocent, who incur the Censure, if you are found where others do it. You will remember, that while you was unmarried, I us'd to repeat to you the Names of *Park-walker* and *Auction-bunter*, with great Disapprobation: Be assur'd, there are yet more Reasons against your being too constant at the one, or ever being at the other now, than there were then. They might then have prevented your being happy, but they may now make you miserable.

You will see, my Dear, I have in this Respect, as in all others, endeavour'd to point you out a Medium for your Conduct. 'Tis best in all Respects, but of all it is most best with Regard to the Conduct of a marry'd Life. I wou'd neither have you made an Ant or a Tortoise, with the antient Moralists; nor
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wou'd I have you be a Fly, according to the Practice of the modern Libertines. Be not wholly confined to the House for your Husband's Honour, nor be eternally abroad for your own. I have always told you, that the Woman of Reason will prefer a few select Friends to a Multitude of common Acquaintance. Make a great Difference, my Dear, between your Friendly Visits and your Calls of Form; avoid Routs, and let your Favourites of your own Sex be older than yourself. There is a Pride in giving Protection, but 'tis more prudent to receive it.

LETTER XVII.

On the Management of Conversation.

YOU see, my Dear, that I have not only indulged you in the Thought of having some female Acquaintance with whom to be often, and upon a Footing of the greatest Intimacy. You will know,

know, from a Reason I gave you, in one of the first Letters, how eligible Persons of this Sex, older than yourself, are in Comparifon of the younger ; but I here meant it on another Account, as they wou'd be more experienced.

I have always fpoken againft Cards, and I think it no trifling Circumftance in your Favour that you are naturally not inclin'd to them. You will know, that when I mention'd a certain Kind of People, as the moft proper for your Familiarity, I had my Eye upon fome particular Perfons : You will not be flow to conceive whom I mean ; and you will not like thofe whofe good Qualities wou'd make you approve them, the lefs becaufe they are your Relations. They have the Prudence to deteft Cards as much as you do ; and confequently very many of your Evenings will be fpent in their Company, in a Manner that becomes rational Creatures in Converfation. Nothing appears fo eafy as a proper Management of this, but nothing is fo diffi-

difficult: I don't mean that it is not easy to make it agreeable to you, but 'tis more worth your while to consider how you shall make it advantageous. Pray receive my Opinions on this Head with Candour.

It is easy to talk, and it is agreeable to do it. Few are qualified for it; but very few, my Dear, are cautious of any Deficiency in that Respect. 'Tis for this Reason that ten People are despicable in Company for one that is thought of favourably; and what is worse, the People most qualified to speak, are for this Reason, and by this Means, kept silent. Pray, my Dear, understand Conversation as it was meant to be, not as a mere Source of Laughter; for tho' I am no Enemy to Mirth, I cannot allow it to usurp the Place of Wisdom, but for Improvement: Those who converse together with Freedom and Candour, communicate to one another all the Advantages of their several Experience, and each is assisted by the Life of the other.

other. You will hear me very often, my Dear, using the Words Experience and Inexperience, in the Place of those of Wisdom and Folly: And they are very much the same Thing. I am about to tell you, that it is for the common Advantage of a Company to let the wisest Person speak most: But when I address that Observation to you, I shall change the Phrase, and say the most experienced. To speak with great Sincerity, I do not know a Person of better Understanding than yourself; yet the Advantages of Experience will give to every one of these, whom I promise myself I shall continue to see your favourite Companions, an Opportunity of judging better than you can, and consequently of instructing you in a thousand Things. I do not mean by this, my Dear, that they will be forcing their Advice upon you, or attempting to dictate to you in your Affairs. This wou'd be Impertinence of which they cannot be guilty; and it wou'd be a Meanness to suffer it, and therefore I know you will

will not. What I mean by this, is, my Dear, that their Conversation will be instructive to you: You will hear their Opinions of the Occurrences of the World that offer for Conversation, and you will learn to form your own Judgments properly by the Effect of their Experience.

'Tis in this Manner that I flatter myself I shall see their Wisdom, my dear Child, useful to you; and to render it so in the greatest Degree, let me remind you of applying to the present Purpose what I have mention'd generally with Regard to Conversation. I do not say that any one of these has a better Understanding than you, probably not one knew so much as you do at your Age, or cou'd have judg'd so well, but now they have Experience. You will understand, that altho' it be a Pleasure to hear yourself speak, it is an Advantage to hear them, and consequently you will have the Prudence often to give the Preference where it is due. I wou'd not
have

have you silent, my Dear, nay, when Trifles are the Subject, talk as much as any of them, but distinguish when the Discourse turns upon Things of Importance, and then know you will be improved by hearing.

What I have recommended as your best Conduct, with Regard to your Friends and Acquaintance, I shall also apply with Regard to your Husband. A Medium between too much Silence, and an eternal Pratling; and more than all, a Prudence to distinguish when it is Time for the one, and when for the other. Your Husband, my Dear, is young, he is himself sprightly; and all your Sprightliness, unless it be ill-tim'd, will please him; he loves you, and therefore he will be pleas'd even with your Follies: But know when 'tis proper to give a Loose to them. You are in this Respect not only to distinguish when you should speak, and when 'tis better to be silent, but also what you are to speak, or of what Kind.

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I wou'd have you look upon your Husband as upon your older Female Acquaintance, as a Person capable of instructing you. Altho' he is not much older than yourself, yet as a Man he must have seen more of the World than you can, who are a Woman, and consequently, in all Cases, he will be better able to judge. Beside, what in the other Case was only Respect, becomes here a Duty. You owe to him your Obedience, and the Title of a Superior, and therefore also you are to attend to him. I have seen those Women, (and they are not unhappy ones neither, altho' the World has thought so;) who tho' full of Talk in the Absence of their Husband, have been always reserved and mute in his Presence: 'Tis from this single Circumstance the World have thought them unhappy. Such a Silence stamps upon him the Character of a Churl or a Tyrant, and upon yourself that of a Slave. 'Tis well to have a disinterested and unprejudiced and a friendly Judge of one's Conduct:

Conduct: There is nothing an ingenuous Mind can desire so much, because it gives an Opportunity of strengthening what is right, and remedying what is amiss in it; and who is so proper for that disinterested and friendly Office as an Husband? Instead of a Reserve in his Presence assume an Air of Freedom. Let People see you are pleas'd at his coming in, and give yourself Liberty of more Conversation. He will tell you at Home if you spoke too much, or if you spoke improperly; and he will tell you truly. Your Reputation is in a great Degree his own, and therefore you may believe him: But he will name these Things so tenderly, that you will see your Faults in a too favourable Light, if you do not understand him as hinting to you what your own Thoughts must pursue rather than as speaking plainly. I think you happy, my Dear; and I wou'd fain have you continue so. It would be terrible, while so many Wives are made unhappy by the ill Qualities of their Husbands, you shou'd meet with
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the same Fate from the good ones of yours ; and I do assure you there is Danger. I can see that you are young enough to want a Monitor, and I can see that he has too much Tendernefs to do the Office roundly. Expect not to hear him tell you of your Faults ; for you have scarce any Thing that can deserve so harsh a Name, nor if you had, has he Severity of Temper to do it with Roughnefs. You must know that all you will meet with from him will be the gentlest Caution ; but then you are to know it, as your Duty and your Interest, to pay that an Attention of the strictest Kind. If he thinks you carry'd this Point too far, be assur'd you were extravagant ; if he asks you whether you do not think you was wrong in some other Article, be assur'd that you was, and avoid it afterwards ; you will charm him by the Observance you pay to his Admonitions, and by the Regard you shew these little Hints, you will ensure yourself from any Thing more unwelcome.

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L E T T E R XVIII.

Of the Management of a Family.

I Have led you by the Hand, my Dear, from the most easy to the most seemingly difficult Parts of the Duty of a Wife. I have brought you from the most trivial to the most important; and I wou'd ask you, Do not those, which at first seem'd unpleasant, become easy and desireable, as they are better understood? I know you will confess they do. In the same Manner, my Dear, the most slight acquire a new Degree of Weight in the Examination, and the most important shew you more of their Necessity; this is the Use of Consideration, my Dear, and this you will always find the Fruit of it.

I have postpon'd to the latter Part of my Advice to you, that Concern which is the most essential and the most weighty of all; and I have done it designedly, that being first perfectly inform'd from Reason,

Reason, and not impos'd upon by Imagination, with Regard to the others, you may enter upon this with a due Sense of the Manner in which you are to fulfil it, as well as with a Resolution of doing so.

You will understand, my Dear, that I am about to mention to you now the Oeconomy of your Family. 'Tis of the most certain Importance, and it cannot be introduced with too much Caution, or press'd upon you with more than the requisite Earnestness. Not only your Interest, my Dear, is concern'd in this, but your Credit. There is no Occasion of so much Reputation to a Woman, be her Quality what it will, so great as the saying that her Family is regular and well-govern'd: And let me add, that there is no Fortune so moderate that will not serve to make an Appearance, and a good one on such Foundation; nor is there any so great that it will support its just Appearance long without it. The peculiar Instructions on such an Head as

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this

this can only be suited to the peculiar Circumstances of the Persons to whom they are addressed; nay and the Caution is more strict only to those Peculiarities of Temper and Disposition, under which both are to enjoy those Circumstances; but altho' on this Consideration I am not able, my Dear, to give Advice, even to you who are so near, and whose Affairs are so much known to me, yet there are many general Hints which I can lay before you, and which you will every Day find Occasions of bringing into Practice. In the first Place, I believe you need not be told that in order to be happy, it is necessary first to be easy; and be assur'd, that those who are not easy at Home will never taste Enjoyment any where else. To be easy is to be regular: Set out, my Dear, with a Principle of never neglecting any Thing at the Time when it is proper to consider it; and you will never be perplexed and prevented with the Multiplicity of Concerns. These Things offer singly, and they are easily dis-

dispatched. 'Tis the neglecting them that accumulates them; and while you look on a confus'd Number, without knowing which to begin with, you let alone all.

Nothing is so common, as for People to be plunder'd by their Servants, and they are the more liable to it, as their Fortunes are the greater. Of all Things that are easy to be gone thro' at first, Accounts of this kind are the easiest; of all others, when they are neglected, they become the most confus'd, displeasing and impracticable. You recollect the Circumstances when a Thing is recent, but you forget them after the Time is elaps'd. You expect the Expence of a few Days in Articles that you remember; you are astonish'd at the Sum when you have forgot the Things that it concerns: But this is not all: Your Servants will soon perceive, whether you inspect their Accounts, and whether you do it regularly; they will know all the Profit that may

be made of your Forgetfulness; and they will not part with any Portion of the Advantage. I do not pretend to say, my Dear, that all the Care in the World can prevent them from imposing on you, all do, and all will do it; but that's a Trifle which you can suffer by it, while you take the Caution of examining them often, and they see you do it carefully, compared with what they will attempt and will succeed in, if they see you are remiss.

The proper Management of them in their several Parts of Duty, is not of half so much Consequence as this, and yet many pride themselves upon it, and think they have done great Things, when they have in that Point regulated their Family. 'Tis true, that this carries its more immediate Reward: The World's Eye is open to it, and it has their Applause; but the other, tho' it concerns only yourself, concerns you much more nearly, and you will be unhappy in every other Incident

dent of Life merely from a Neglect in it.

What makes a Remissness in this Article the more unpardonable, is, that there is nothing so easy. There require Parts and Talents in many Scenes of Life, which when they are settled by their Influence are not of great Importance: But this is in the Power of every one; and yet almost all neglect it. How do you suppose it is, my Dear, that among the Men, those of the weakest Parts, become rich often sooner than the Wisest? The Lesson you will learn from them is not more familiar than useful: It is, That Care will go farther than Genius or Abilities. My Dear, be assur'd, that for one Estate that is got, among the Men of Business, there are ten sav'd; and 'tis the same Thing among the People of Fortune and of no Profession: A Thousand are ruin'd by Carelessness, for one that suffers by absolute Extravagance.

Attend to this, my Dear, 'tis not the less true because little perceiv'd, nor the less important because seen least by those who have most Concern in it. I have told you, my Dear, that 'tis only confus'd when 'tis neglected; and let me add, that there is such a Thing as Method and Order, which will render even Things, in their Nature disagreeable, easy and pleasant.

It is reported of the great Regent of *France*, (and it has been quoted by many Writers) That being ask'd how it was possible for him to go thro' such a Multiplicity of Business? He answer'd, "By doing one Thing at a Time." The Answer is greatly to his Honour; but that's a Trifle, it may be made, my Dear, of great Use to every Body. If he cou'd transact the Affairs of a mighty Kingdom, and at the same Time be devoted, for so he was, more than almost all Men to his Pleasures; it cannot be difficult for you to regulate the Oeconomy

mony of a little Family with the same Degree of Order, without interrupting the Course of your ordinary Amusements. When I say, the Care of your Family will not encroach upon your Pleasures, I speak much less than I mean; it will prove to you itself a Pleasure, and one of the greatest.

There is nothing so tiresome, so vexatious, or so impertinent as Business, when it breaks in upon People at improper Times; but on the contrary, there is nothing so agreeable when it is attended to at the proper Seasons. Have you not heard, my Dear, of the Pleasure the Men who have been bred to Business take in it, even after they have no longer any Occasion to practise it: Have you not heard of those, who when they had retir'd from the Town, full of the Advantages of Trade, have found themselves unhappy even in the Want of its Bustle. Employment, my Dear, far from being in its Nature disagreeable

to the human Mind, is pleasing ; and it not only gives Pleasure in the Moments devoted to it, but it gives a Relish for those which succeed.

Let me, my Dearest ***, make you in Love with Business : It will need only to make you acquainted with it truly to bring this about. 'Tis of great Importance to your Happiness ; and be assur'd there is no such Thing as enjoying any Part of your Life truly and thoroughly without it. There are a Thousand little Things which you cannot expect an Husband to attend to, they are indeed unworthy of his Attention ; and it wou'd look mean in him to busy himself about them. These all concern the Affairs of your Family, and these belong to you. Leave to him the Care of his Estate, do you take that of the House : Let him manage the Tenants ; do you take Order about the Servants : They are two quite different Provinces ; and you will each execute your own best by neglecting the other wholly.

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There is nothing, my Dear, that will procure you the Esteem of your Husband equally with this; and being already secure of his Affection, it is this at which you are to aim. He will know this as a most necessary Article in the Oeconomy of his Affairs: He will know it does not by any Means become him to attend to it himself, in as much as it is almost a Discredit to him to look into it. He will wish that you, to whom it properly belongs, wou'd take the Care of it: But perhaps he will be tender in naming it to you, lest it shou'd appear an Hardship. How happy will he then be to find you of yourself readily undertaking it and perfectly performing it. He will be happy that the necessary Regard is paid to these Concerns; and while he is so, he will be doubly pleas'd, because 'tis you who do it. Even if it were troublesome, this Consideration ought to recommend it to you, but it is not so. I know in the

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Prospect it has such an Appearance, but in the Undertaking it is otherwise.

There is no Indulgence so great as the neglecting one's Duty. I am sorry to confess that this is a Truth, but 'tis so, and I despise Dissimulation; but, my Dear, there is also a Consideration on the other Side. Altho' there is no Indulgence equal to the neglecting our Duty, there is no Pleasure comparable to the Thought of having perform'd it. We all know what is right, and when we give ourselves most Liberty in doing that which is wrong we condemn it. Nay 'tis not limited to the Moment of the Decision, either in the Praise or in the Censure: There is a continual Uneasiness attending on the Omission; and one is displeas'd with one's self for having been guilty of it. 'Tis a disagreeable Thought that comes across all our Pleasures, and gives us an Anxiety for the Day; nay, it wou'd last longer, did not the fresher Condemnation of the succeeding Morning supersede it. On the

the contrary, there is no Person in whatsoever Station, be it ever so high, or ever so low, who is not conscious of something as a Duty ; and there is none who does not enjoy a Tranquility of Mind, which is not only Pleasure in itself but gives a Taste of Pleasure to every Thing else in the Remembrance of having perform'd it. My Dear, this Care of your Family, and its Concerns, is the Object that will appear to you in the Light of this Duty. You will taste no Pleasure on the Day in which you have neglected it, that will be an Uneasiness in the Remembrance of this Omission ; and the Necessity of its being yet at some time to be done, will embitter every Thing : 'Twill appear infinitely more troublesome in the Prospect than it wou'd have been found in the Reality ; and in Proportion to the Sense you wou'd have of this will be your Taste of the Satisfaction.

You will throw yourself into your Chair
with a happy Unconcern on the Morn-
ing

ing when you have done it. It will appear indifferent to you what becomes of the rest of the Day, now you have perform'd all that was necessary to do in it; and you will at the same Time, that you are above the Reach of its Cares, be open to all its Satisfaction. These cannot be tasted, even the greatest of them, without that Tranquility which is only to be obtain'd from this Source, and this ennobles even the least of them.

Let me be tedious on this Subject: Let me repeat to you my Admonitions, my Cautions, and those Promises which I assure you will be all made good to you. There were at one Time Diversions for the Hours, that ought to be employ'd by some Person, in every prudent Family, to this Purpose: But they are at an End; this is perhaps the only Kingdom in the World in which there were publick Entertainments suffer'd, at a Time when it was impossible any should attend them, without the greatest Neglect of their Affairs; but the Legislature

lature have seen the Impropriety of suffering them, and they have prevented them. I remember the People who were ambitious to be thought Persons of Taste, flocking to see a Buffoon in the *Hay-market*. 'Twas an Imputation upon their Understandings not to have been there. I have seen every Creature that had a Right to the Denomination of Fashion, crowd to Breakfast at *Ranelagh*: Nay, so far was it going, that *Vauxhall* and *Marybon* were following the Example; and on those Days of the Week when they were open, you cou'd not buy a Gown, nor give Orders for a Cap: The whole Legion of Trades-People were there.

I don't produce these People to you as Examples, my Dear, but as Warnings; you will know their necessary Affairs of Life must be all neglected for this; and if these cou'd not restrain them; remember that there is some Danger to you whose immediate Maintenance does not depend upon your

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Application, that you may fall into the same idle Faults. I give you such Instances to shew you the Degree of the Danger.

I think the Temptation now is only from the Fashion of Morning Visits: And do not suppose I am about to warn you against these; on the contrary, I recommend them to you earnestly. If Conversation be the Intent of Visiting, 'tis in these that you must look for it, for Cards take up the Evening: But, my Dear, Cards take up the Night too, at least so much of it, that these which are call'd Morning Appointments, are really paid in the Afternoon; and you who not wasting the Night in Folly, will not find it necessary to pass the real Morning in Sleep, will have sufficient Time to make all the Use I recommend of it, and to do all this afterwards.

Half an Hour in each Day is as much as you will need to employ in the necessary Care of your Family, provided
it

it be every Day employ'd. If you neglect To day, To-morrow's Business will be tedious ; but taking for each only its own Portion, this little Allotment will suffice, and will perform it perfectly. There will be no Portion of your Time so wisely or so well spent, none that will give your Husband so much Pleasure ; and when you have thus not only assur'd yourself that all is well at Home, but that you have made it so, you will go out with a Satisfaction unknown to all but those who have found the same Road to it : You will look with Pity, for that Turn your tender Disposition will give it, tho' it might justify Contempt, upon those unhappy because unwise People, whom you visit : And whom as you trip in with all the chearful Ease and healthy Spirit that attends on Sobriety and Virtue, you see stretching their almost useless Limbs upon a Couch, or pulling open those Eyes that saw the Morning Light before they clos'd.

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If this be a Consideration that will afford you Pleasure; for there is a Pleasure, and 'tis an innocent if it be not a good-natur'd Pleasure, in measuring our own Happiness by the Unhappiness of others: What will be the Satisfaction with which you will look upon your own Conduct in the Sequel. With what Transport will you see the Advantages of your own natural Spirit, and easy Circumstances, when you see them ready to die with Fatigue and Discontent, and almost willing to die with Despair: When you hear them complain of Losses they are unable to pay; and when you see the Dread under which they conceal such painful Considerations, on the Approach of him who ought to be their Comfort under all Misfortunes.

You see, my dearest * * *, (for 'tis with that I wou'd conclude) how one Good attends upon another in the Marry'd State, and how one Mischief, in the same Manner, follows upon another's
Heels,

Heels, when the Occasions of that Good are neglected. You see how the Extravagance of the Night at once discomposes and incapacitates for the Oeconomy and Business of the Morning; and altho' you do not see it, let me assure you that the contrary is as certain; and that there is no Admonition so powerful against the Extravagance of the Evening as the Care of Affairs in the Morning. But this to you is a Caution that I know will never be necessary. Look into the rest of the Difference between you, who are and whom Heaven send I may always find an unfashionable Creature in this Respect, and these People, as they will call themselves of Taste whom you visit. You wish to preserve the Affection of your Husband; and you take the Method by which 'tis to be done. Look on yourself and look on these: Are languid Looks, pale Countenances, mad Faces full of Care, the Way to have it? No, you who have Health and Ease and Tranquility in yours, wear all that can be lovely and engaging. You
see

see these People of all Things dreading most to let the Partners of their Hearts into their Secrets; and of all Secrets concealing the most carefully those which give them Pain. With what a Triumph must you see your own Condition in the Comparifon. You who have Pleasure in acquainting that neareft Friend with every Thought your Bosom harbours; you who find in him the most safe Repository for all your Thoughts, who when there is any Consideration that gives you Uneasinefs, fly to him and find Satisfaction in his Advice, and Health in his Condolance.

'Tis thus, my Dear, that Heaven intended those who were marry'd shou'd live with another; 'tis thus Nature dictates to them they should; and Reason adds the Authority of her Sanction, and the Weight of all her Arguments to enforce it. You see how desireable a State it is, my Dearest; and while you own it such, 'tis in your Possession and 'tis in your Power to keep it so. You have
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my Advice, I think, in every Article in which it can be necessary to you. I have been long marry'd, and I have built what I have said to you not only on the Experience those Years have given me in my own Situation, but on what I have seen in others.

Remember what depends upon your paying it a due Regard, but I know you will do so. Pray God bless you Child, and may I see you always happy.

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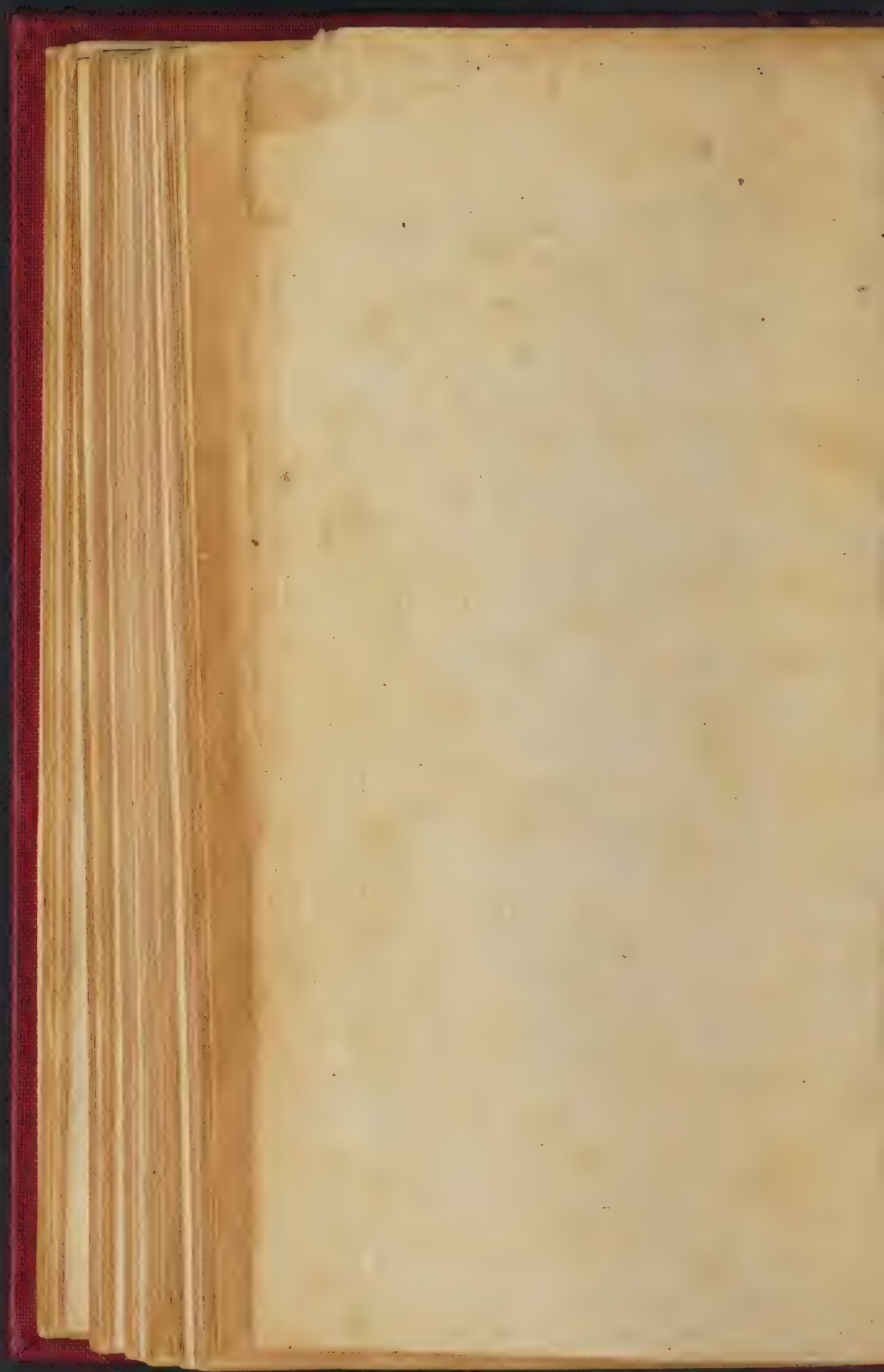
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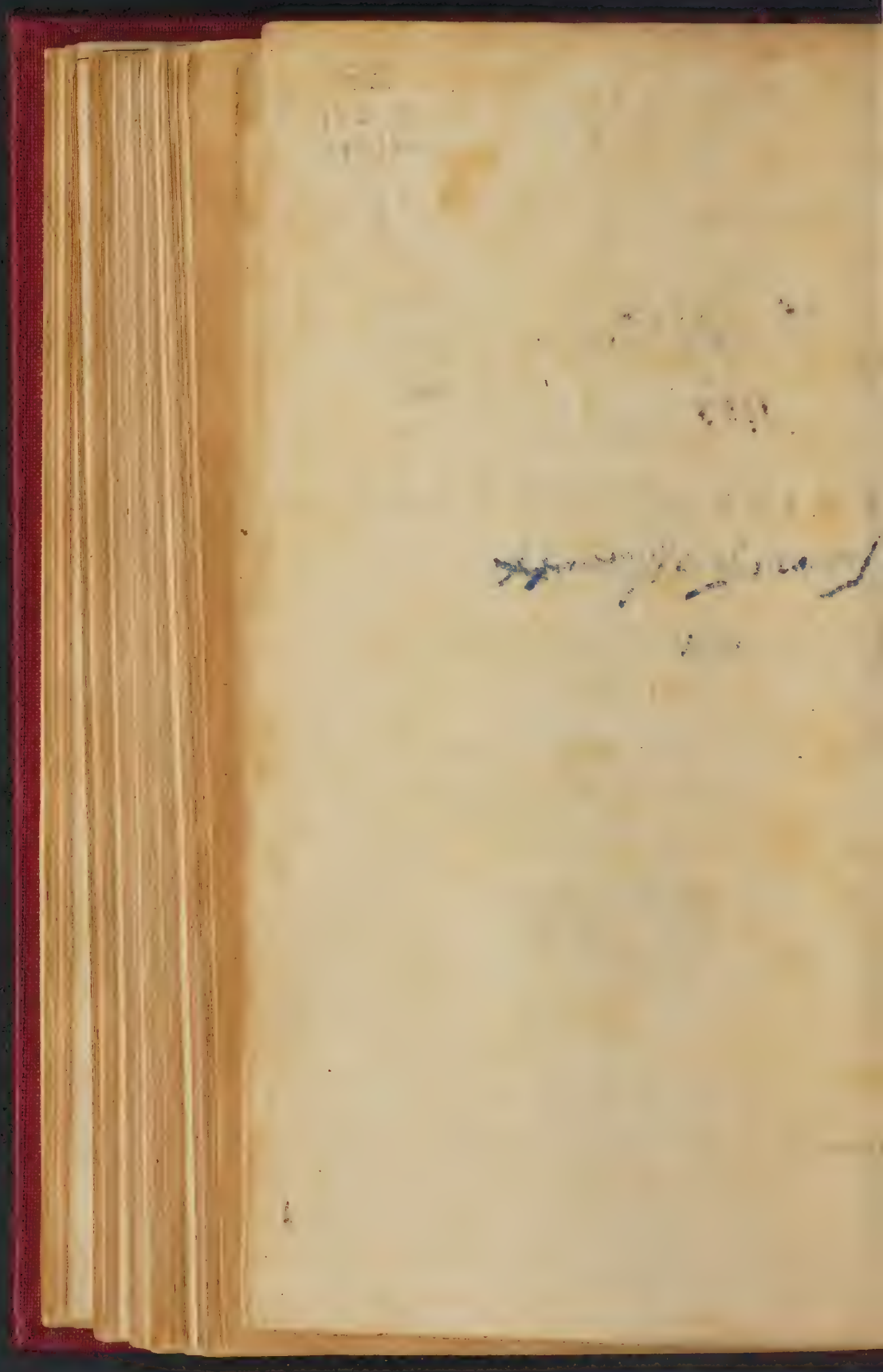


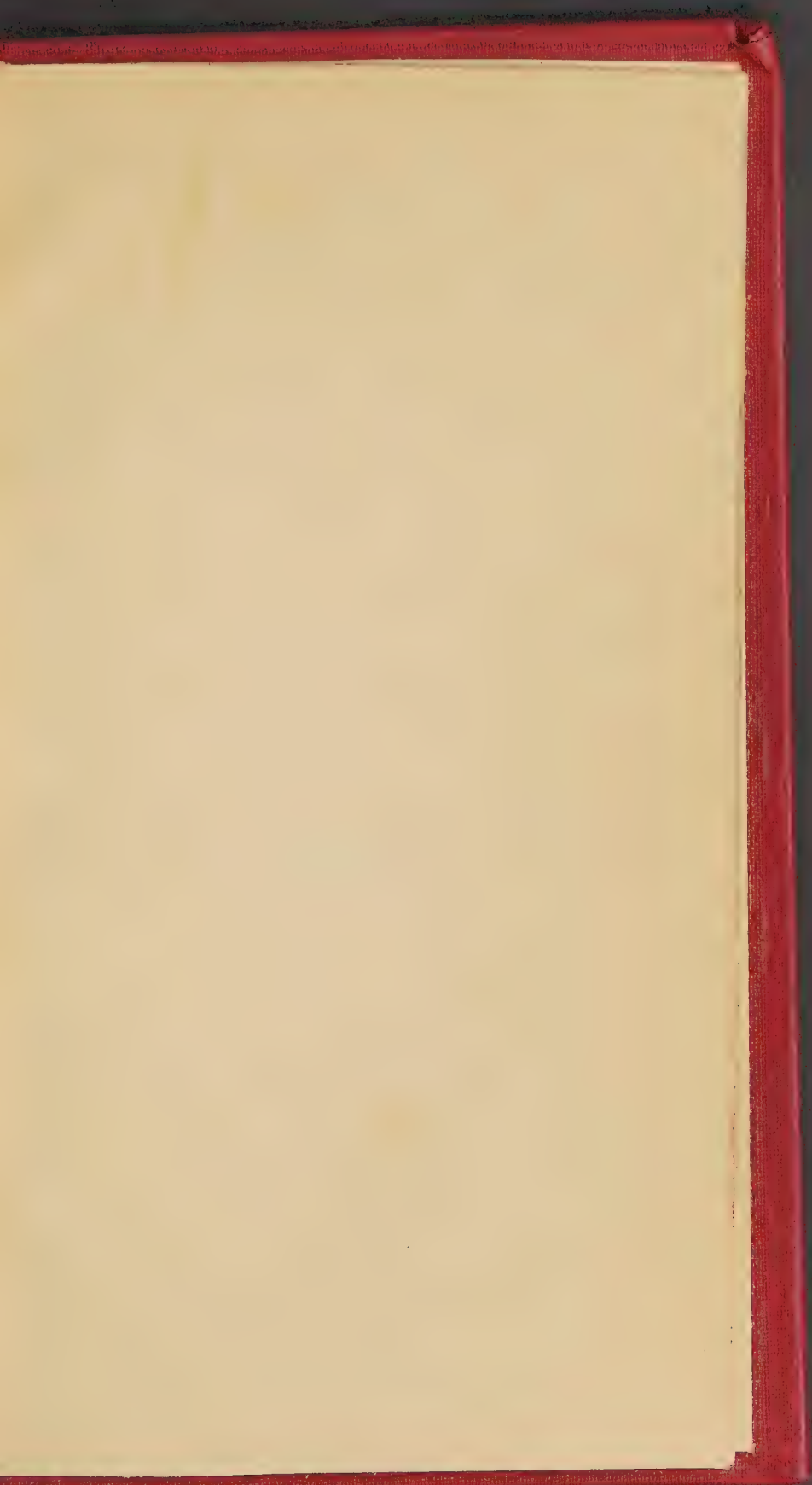
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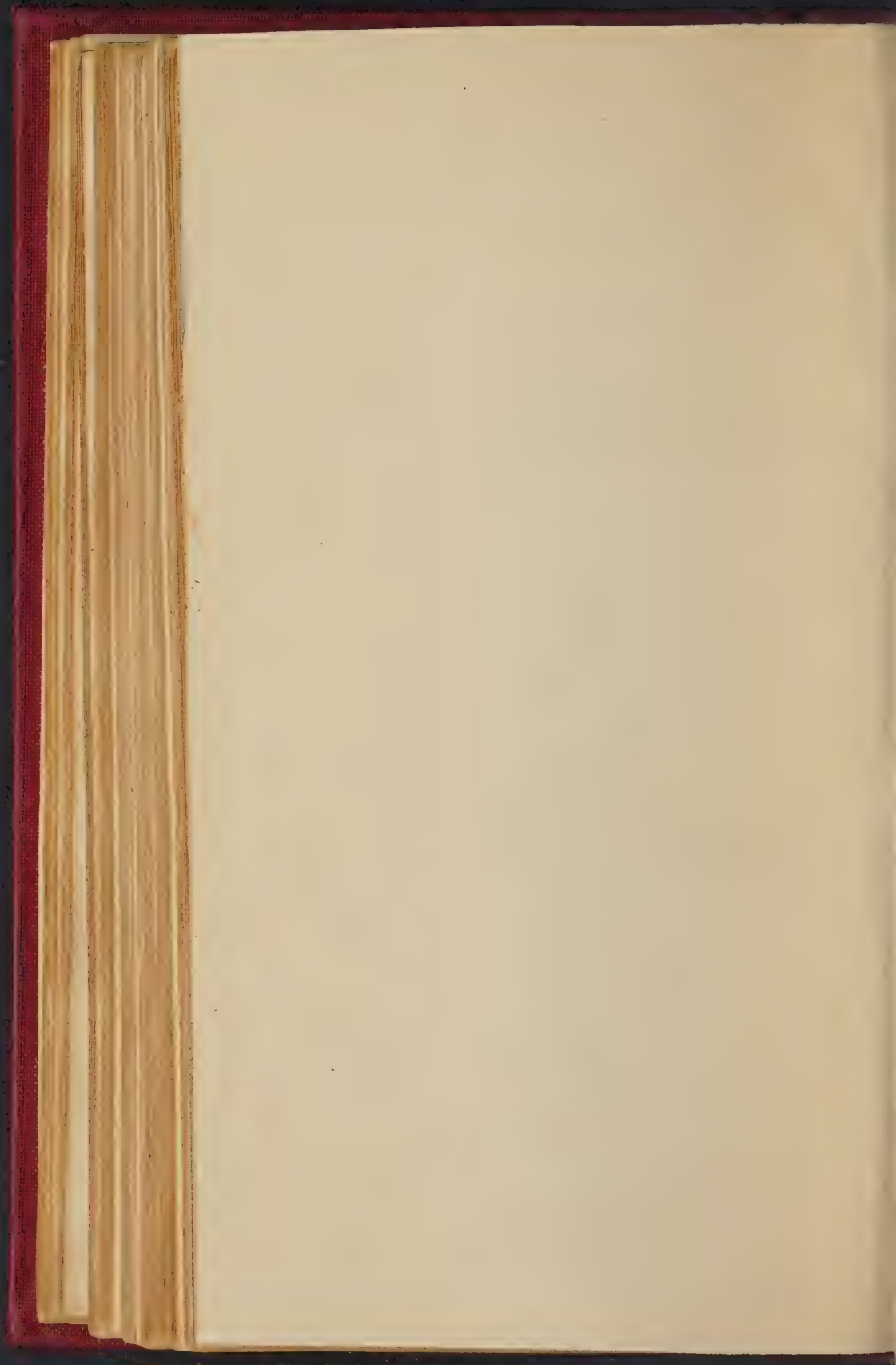
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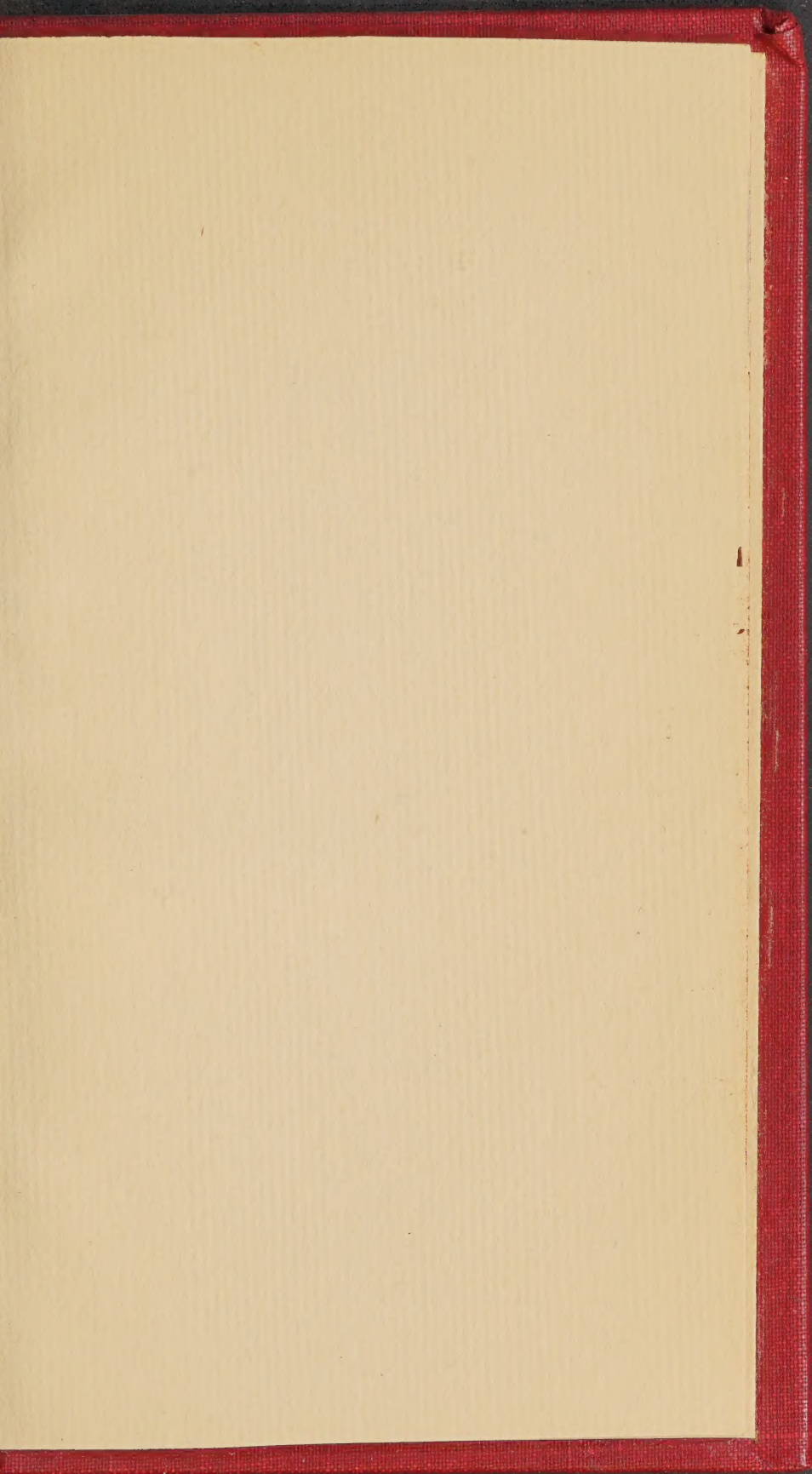
Loranda Less Woodruff

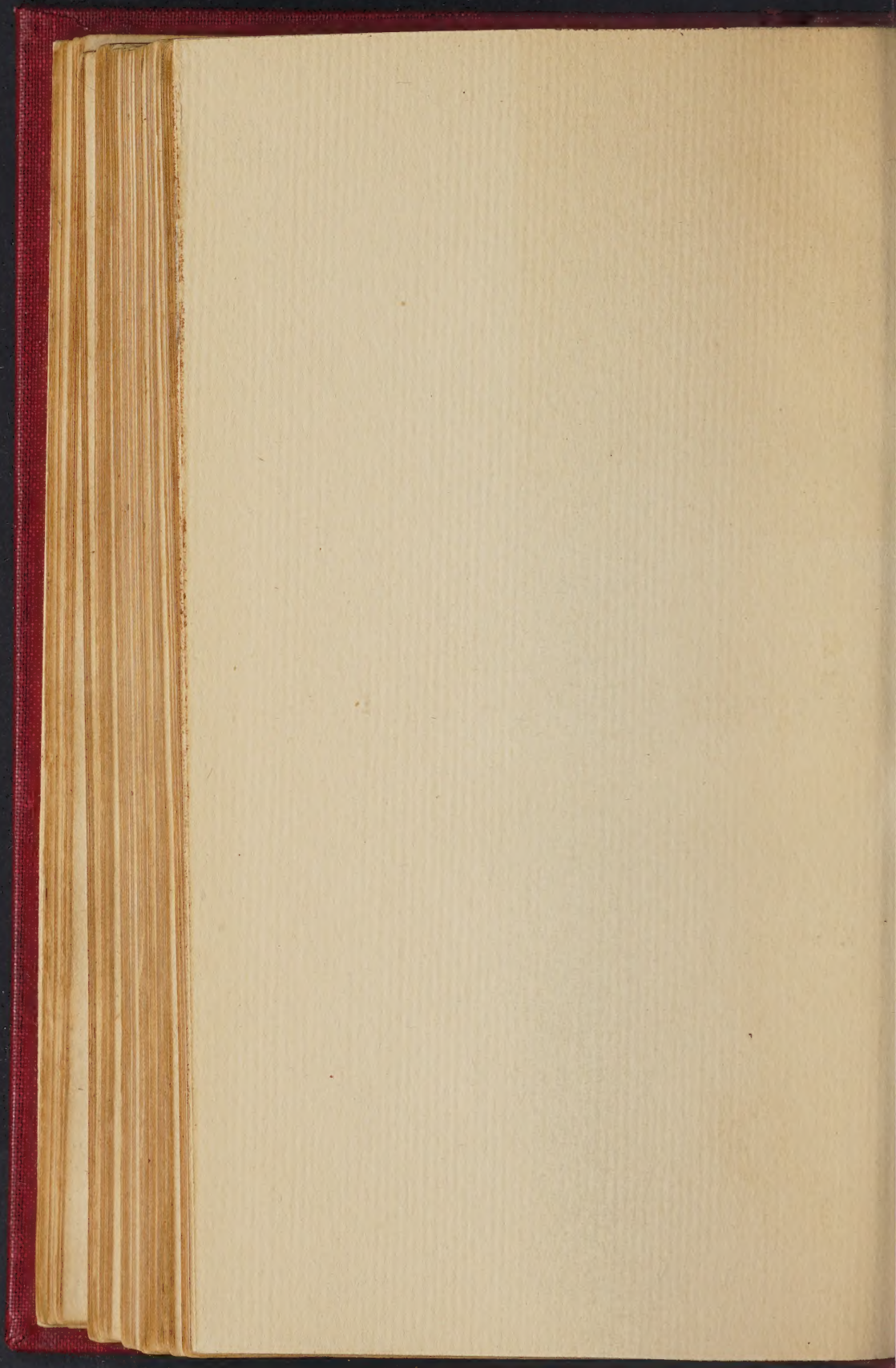
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